

This Document is the Property of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.]

Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. May 1893.

CONFIDENTIAL.

(6349.)

FO. 403 /
76.

F.O.

403

PART 4.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF TUNIS.

1892.

176

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	SUBJECT.	Page
1	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	3A	Jan. 12, 1892	Dismissal of British subjects employed as tobaccoists in the Regency. Hardship of Correspondence respecting ..	1
2	" " ..	5	18,	Question of establishment of a Court of Appeal at Tunis. M. Picot's scheme of periodical Assises to be held by officials from Algiers..	7
3	To Mr. Egerton ..	26	27,	Dismissal of British subjects, tobaccoists, by the Tunisian Government. Copy of No. 1. To represent hardship entailed and absence of due notice, which would afford claim to compensation ..	7
4	To Mr. R. D. Hay ..	1	27,	Dismissal of British subjects. Approves his proceedings as reported in No. 1 ..	8
5	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	9	Feb. 2,	A British subject, holder of a Beylical letter authorizing him to sell tobacco, dismissed by authorities and replaced by a Tunisian subject (see No. 1) ..	8
6	" " ..	10	10,	Report of Committee on extension of competence of French Tribunals in questions relating to real property. Extract from "Dépêche Tunisienne" ..	8
7	" " ..	11	16,	Extension of French influence on Tripolitan frontiers. Measures adopted to secure ..	11
8	" " ..	13	16,	Bizerta. Newspaper extract, stating that a commercial port there is the sole object and intention of the Beylical Government ..	11
9	" " ..	14	20,	Complaint by British subjects at Gerba of violation of domicile by local authorities. Correspondence respecting. Has replied that they should have recourse to competent Tribunals for redress if they consider themselves entitled to it ..	11
10	Mr. Egerton ..	79	Mar. 3,	Dismissal of British subjects (see No. 5). As a special favour, French Resident has orders to consider cases favourably, and to give satisfaction if claims are well founded ..	14
11	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	17	1,	Arrests of Frenchmen on Tripolitan frontiers by Turkish and Tunisian police ..	14
12	To Mr. Egerton ..	47	7,	Dismissal of British subjects (see No. 10). To express satisfaction with which Her Majesty's Government have received friendly assurances of French Government ..	14
13	To Mr. R. D. Hay ..	3	8,	Complaint reported in No. 9. Approves his action ..	14
14	Mr. Phipps ..	94	14,	Dismissal of British subjects (see No. 12). Has expressed satisfaction at friendly assurances. M. Hanotaux says matter was arranged confidentially, and concession is not to constitute a precedent. He will renew recommendation of favourable treatment ..	15
15	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	16	10,	Return of French Resident. Changes in staff of Residency ..	15
16	" " ..	20	18,	Bizerta. Strength of garrison. No military works commenced on sites of fortifications, and no siege guns arrived ..	15
17	" " ..	21	23,	Real property. Three Beylical Decrees respecting (see No. 6) ..	16
18	" " ..	24	Apr. 2,	Dismissal of British subjects. Conversation with French Resident. His wish to discuss question amicably ..	16
19	To Mr. R. D. Hay ..	5	20,	Approves his language, as reported in above ..	17
20	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	25	19,	Conference of French colonists to discuss reforms and improvements in the Regency. Third session ..	17
21	" " ..	26	24,	Bizerta. Report on French works submitted to Italian War Minister. Report dwells on its strategical importance as a key to the Mediterranean ..	17

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	SUBJECT.	Page
22	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	27	Apr. 26, 1892	Speech by M. Pauliat at banquet given by members of Conference of French colonists. In favour of granting Tunisia greater independence and autonomy, but averse to its annexation to Algeria ..	18
23	" " ..	28	29,	Conference of French colonists (see No. 20). Session closed. Financial statement by Resident ..	18
24	" " ..	30	May 10,	Assurances by Resident that equal rights would be accorded to all foreigners in the purchase of land from the Tunisian Government ..	19
25	" " ..	32	24,	List of British subjects dismissed from employment as tobaccoists (see No. 18). Makes suggestions as to compensation, and requests instructions ..	19
26	" " ..	33	28,	Bizerta. Steady progress of works. Sites for fortifications selected by military authorities ..	21
27	To Mr. R. D. Hay ..	8	June 3,	Compensation for dismissed tobaccoists. To try and arrange on lines suggested in No. 25, but might accept smaller sum for immediate settlement ..	22
28	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	37	6,	Assassination of Ghazi Khirki by Moorish subjects in Tunis in consequence of the exaction of the "medja" or poll tax, from which they had been exempt ..	22
29	" " ..	38	9,	Dismissal of British subjects by Municipality of Tunis consequent on abolition of gate taxes on cereals. Reassuring language of French Chargé d'Affaires ..	23
30	To Mr. R. D. Hay ..	10	20,	Approves his representations to French Chargé d'Affaires, as reported in above ..	24
31	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	40	14,	Conversion of Tunisian debt effected by M. Massicaut. Economies to be applied to Tunis-Bizerta Railway ..	24
32	" " ..	23	July 4,	Conversion of Tunisian loan, Beylical Decrees respecting ..	25
33	" " ..	44	17,	Claims of British and Italian gate tax collectors (see No. 29). Assurances of Resident that matter has not been overlooked ..	29
34	" " ..	46	20,	Bizerta. Dredging work going on. Numerous visits by French officers. Items from Italian paper "L'Unione" ..	30
35	" " ..	50	29,	Renowned intention of French Government to annex and incorporate in Algeria the part of Tunis between River Medjerba and Algerian frontier ..	30
36	Acting Consul-General Mazas	8	Aug. 12,	See above. Can find no confirmation of ..	30
37	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	53	27,	Attack by Tunisian border tribes on Tripolitans of Gbel Nalut. Telegram from Italian Vice-Consul at Gabes ..	31
38	" " ..	54	30,	See above. British Consular Agent at Gabes reports conflict on frontier between Tunisian troops and Tripolitan tribes. French Chargé d'Affaires says disturbance is trivial ..	31
39	" " ..	Telegraphic	Sept. 5,	British Vice-Consul at Gerba reports grave disturbances on Tripolitan frontier. Object of French is to occupy Wassen ..	32
40	" " ..	55	1,	Claims of British tax collectors (see No. 33). Settlement of. Letter from French Chargé d'Affaires, stating compensation given ..	32
41	" " ..	Telegraphic	6,	Italian Consul at Gabes reports Wassen occupied by 1,200 Tunisians. Turkish military authorities have protested, but offered no opposition (see No. 39) ..	33
42	" " ..	56	1,	Recent disturbances on Tripolitan frontier. Letter from Italian Consular Agent at Gabes (see No. 38) ..	33
43	" " ..	Telegraphic	9,	French Resident says peace is restored on Tripolitan frontier, and that there has been no fighting (see No. 33) ..	34
44	To Mr. R. D. Hay ..	13	12,	Settlement of claims of British tax collectors (see No. 40). Satisfaction at ..	34

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	SUBJECT.	Page
45	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	60 Confidential	Oct. 7, 1892	Further particulars respecting late disturbances. Wassen as a strategic position is undoubtedly coveted by French military authorities (see No. 42) ..	34
46	" ..	62	18,	Expropriation for military purposes of plot of land at Bizerta. Beylical Decree respecting	35
47	To Lord Vivian ..	155	26,	Conversation with Italian Ambassador. (1) Bizerta; (2) Tripoli-Tunis frontier. French incursions, and desirability of Turkish troops being sent. His wish for representations at Constantinople ..	36
48	Sir C. Ford ..	322	21,	Tripoli-Tunisian frontier. French encroachments. Despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tripoli ..	36
49	To Sir C. Ford ..	227	Nov. 2,	Tripoli-Tunisian frontier. Desirability of more Turkish troops being sent. To hold similar language as his Italian colleague ..	37
50	" ..	228	7,	Tripoli-Tunisian frontier (see No. 49). Facts should be brought to knowledge of Sultan. To co-operate generally with Italian Ambassador ..	37
51	Marquis of Dufferin ..	231	8,	Death of French Resident in Tunis, M. Massicault. M. Ch. Rouvier, French Minister at Buenos Ayres, spoken of as his successor ..	37
52	To Lord Vivian ..	161	11,	State of affairs on Tripoli-Tunis frontier. Copies of Nos. 49 and 50, for communication	38
53	Lord Vivian ..	237 Very Conf.	10,	Bizerta (see No. 47). Views of Italian Government. They look to Her Majesty's Government to take the initiative in requesting explanations respecting the fortifications, and will support our representations ..	38
54	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	64	8,	Funeral of M. Massicault, French Resident. Remarks on his career ..	39
55	Marquis of Dufferin ..	334	14,	Seditious Arabic publications in Tunis. Orders given for prohibition of ..	39
56	Lord Vivian ..	245	23,	Tunis-Tripoli frontier. Instructions to Sir Clare Ford (see No. 52). Note from Italian Government, expressing gratification	39
57	" ..	70 Telegraphic	Dec. 2,	Bizerta. Notice of interpellation in Chamber of Deputies. Proposed reply ..	40
58	To Lord Vivian ..	28 Telegraphic	6,	Bizerta (see above). Would prefer no mention of Her Majesty's Government in the discussion ..	40
59	Lord Vivian ..	254 Confidential	2,	Bizerta (see No. 57). Notice of interpellation in Chamber, and proposed reply. Wish of Signor Uria to express concurrence of Her Majesty's Government in his opinion ..	40
60	Sir C. Ford ..	365	"	Tunis-Tripoli frontier. Intentions of the Italian Ambassador. Will carry out instructions in Nos. 49 and 52 ..	41
61	" ..	115 Telegraphic	19,	Tunis-Tripoli frontier. Turkish Governor at Tripoli intended to place himself in communication with Bey of Tunis in view of appointment of Delimitation Commission ..	41
62	Mr. R. D. Hay ..	70	15,	Arrival and reception of new French Resident, M. Rouvier ..	42
63	" ..	71	19,	Tripolitan frontiers. Preparations for appointment of Delimitation Commission ..	42
64	Sir C. Ford ..	372 Confidential	16,	French incursions in Tripoli territory (see No. 50). Memorandum conveying information read to Sultan's Secretary by Sir A. Sandison ..	42
65	Memorandum communicated by Italian Embassy	Confidential	28,	Latest details respecting works at Bizerta ..	43

CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Tunis.

PART 4.

No. 1.

Consul R. Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 3A.)

My Lord,

Tunis, January 12, 1892.

WHEN the management of the Tobacco Monopoly was assumed by the Tunisian Government on the 1st January, 1891, as I had the honour of reporting to your Lordship in my despatch No. 26, Commercial, of the 31st December, 1890; numerous British subjects in the employment of the former concessionists were dismissed, and their places filled up either by French or Tunisian subjects.

I received complaints at the time from different parts of the Regency, and several tobacco cutters came to Tunis hoping to obtain redress.

On their applying to me, I answered that the Tunisian Government was not, in my opinion, bound to take over persons who had been in the employment of the former contractors, and that I was powerless to interfere officially in the matter. I sent, however, a message to the Director of the Tobacco Monopoly, begging him to take into consideration the past services of the unfortunate tobacco cutters, and to find them employment, as they had no other means of gaining a livelihood.

Those British subjects, on the other hand, whose services were retained by the Tunisian Government from the 1st January, 1891, as retail tobacco cutters, were left under the impression that their situations would be permanent, and it was not until the month of November last, when the Representative Conference of French colonists met under the presidency of the Resident, that they became aware of the intentions of the Government.

One of the first points which engrossed the attention of the Conference was the necessity of employing solely Frenchmen and Tunisians in administrative Departments of the Regency. I beg to inclose a copy of the Resident's address on the subject, extracted from the official record of the meeting in the "Dépêche Tunisienne" of the 20th November last.

M. Massicault stated that owing to the fabulous reports that had been circulated on the subject, he wished to furnish the members with particulars as to the nationalities of officials employed in the Administration, and in the course of his address he gave assurances that France, exercising the government of the Protectorate, would always recruit her officials among Frenchmen and natives.

He also pointed out that the Department of Monopolies was composed of 92 agents, of whom 7 were foreigners, and of 389 retail tobacco dealers, of whom 54 were neither Frenchmen nor natives, but that when the Government undertook the Administration, the agents were engaged for a term of one year, and they were informed that from the commencement of 1892 all tobacco cutters would be either French or Tunisian subjects.

This announcement of the Resident created great consternation amongst foreign tobacco cutters, and especially those of Sfax and Suse, who appear to have been ignorant of the intentions of the Government.

I beg to inclose translations of two letters on the subject, addressed by Vice-Consul

(411)

B

Leonardi, of Sfax, to Mr. Carbonaro during my absence, dated respectively the 30th November and 4th December, stating that all the tobaccoists in Sfax, who with only one exception were British subjects, were to be arbitrarily dismissed on the 1st January, and submitting that the ejection of respectable and well-conducted British subjects, who have been for many years engaged in the trade, and have no other means of subsistence, solely for the purpose of filling their places by Frenchmen, is an infraction of Article V of the General Convention of 1875.

Shortly after my return to Tunis, I addressed a note to the French Resident on the subject, and on the 31st December he informed me in reply that the agents of the late contractors could not be regarded as traders with any privileges whatever, and that the Administrators had acted handsomely in according them a delay of one year to find an employment.

I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship copies of my correspondence with the Resident, together with translations of the Reports I have since received from the Vice-Consuls of Sfax, Susa, and Monastir, accompanied by lists of the British subjects who are now without employment.

The Vice-Consuls, who were instructed to make strict and careful inquiries, state that the tobaccoists had no official warning of the intentions of the Tunisian Government until the end of December, when they received a verbal notice to quit from the French Agent of the Government Monopolies.

I am inclined to place some faith in the statement of the tobaccoists, as I fully believe that these sweeping measures were only lately adopted by the Tunisian Government, and were announced by the French Resident at the opening of the Conference of November last in order to quell the outcry of French colonists, and especially to refute the calumnious articles that were incessantly published in certain local newspapers, accusing him of favouring foreigners to the detriment of his own countrymen.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 1.

Extract from "La Dépêche Tunisienne" of November 23, 1891.

LES FRANÇAIS DANS LES ADMINISTRATIONS DE LA RÉGENCE.—Quand la France a établi son Protectorat sur la Régence, les Administrations Tunisiennes comptaient une assez grande quantité d'employés appartenant à diverses nationalités Européennes et un nombre important d'employés Français. Tous les emplois créés depuis ont naturellement été donnés à des Français. A mesure que les employés étrangers disparaissent, ils sont également remplacés par des Français. Leur nombre a donc considérablement diminué depuis dix ans et diminue tous les jours. Cependant il en reste encore quelques-uns.

"Le Résident-Général a fait à la Conférence la communication suivante sur cette question :—

"Messieurs,

"J'ai cru à propos de vous fournir des renseignements sur la composition du personnel des Administrations de la Régence, quelques-uns d'entre vous m'ayant assuré qu'à ce sujet des légendes très fantaisistes étaient en circulation.

"A vrai dire, je ne m'expliquerais guère que des erreurs puissent s'accréditer, soit sur des faits faciles à vérifier, soit sur nos Résolutions commandées, par des devoirs évidents.

"Mes déclarations, en tout cas, seront aussi nettes que possible, et je suppose qu'elles ne causeront à qui que ce soit aucune surprise.

"La France exerçant ici son Protectorat, nous recrutons nos Agents parmi nos compatriotes et parmi les indigènes.

"Nous avons cependant l'assistance d'un certain nombre d'étrangers, ou parce qu'ils occupent leur emploi depuis longtemps et honnêtement, ou parce que leurs aptitudes spéciales, par exemple leur connaissance des langues du pays, nous ont portés à les utiliser.

"Nous reconnaissons leurs services et ils ne témoignent pas l'envie de nous quitter; plusieurs même ont demandé la naturalisation Française. Mais le cours naturel des choses diminue chaque année leur nombre, et voici présentement où nous en sommes :—

"Secrétariat-Général du Gouvernement Tunisien.

"134 employés, dont 122 Français ou indigènes, 12 étrangers.

"Enseignement Public.

"236 instituteurs, professeurs ou institutrices, dont deux professeurs Italiens et une institutrice de nationalité étrangère, pourvue du Brevet Français et faisant, à Tunis, une classe dans une congrégation religieuse où elle a été élevée.

"Direction des Travaux Publics.

"224 Agents de cadre permanent; 157 Français, 62 indigènes, 5 étrangers, 116 surveillants, dont 93 Français et 23 étrangers.

"Direction des Finances.

"54 employés, dont trois étrangers, interprètes.

"Contributions Diverses.

"155 employés, dont 11 étrangers, polyglottes nécessaires.

"Direction des Monopoles.

"92 agents, dont 7 étrangers, 339 débiteurs de tabac et de poudre relevant de cette Direction.

"Lorsque l'Etat prit cette Régie, 54 débiteurs n'étaient ni Français ni indigènes. Les agents du fermage ont été maintenus pendant la première année.

"On ne pouvait renouveler immédiatement un personnel qui fait rentrer des sommes énormes dans les Caisses de l'Etat.

"Tous les agents ont été avertis, dès le premier jour, qu'à partir de 1892 tous les débiteurs seraient Français ou indigènes, et il en sera toujours ainsi.

"Douanes.

"368 employés, dont 25 étrangers. Il y a cinq ans, les étrangers étaient 50.

"J'ajouterai que, dans tous les services du Protectorat, la tendance, la direction d'esprit sont les mêmes pour recruter le personnel ou les auxiliaires.

"Cet accord a toujours existé, sans qu'il y ait eu à le prescrire.

"Il résulte du sentiment national, qui est au fond de nos cœurs et qui n'a pas besoin d'être excité.

"Étant d'ailleurs ici au nom de la France, il nous convient que notre administration s'y montre non seulement juste, mais bienveillante pour tous; cela convient à la civilisation et à la situation de notre pays."

Inclosure 2 in No. 1.

Vice-Consul Leonardi to Acting Consul-General Carbonaro.

(Translation.)

Sir,

Sfax, November 30, 1891.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, in conformity with instructions given by the Minister Resident, the actual retailers of tobacco, who are, with one exception, all British subjects, are to be substituted on the 1st January next by French or Tunisian subjects.

This very unjust measure has not only injured the feelings of the above retailers, but also all the colony, who see in this action of the Resident a spirit of antagonism by not acknowledging the rights acquired by irreproachable and honest British subjects in an employment which they have enjoyed for many years.

In fact, these retail dealers, of whom I inclose a note, have been enjoying this business since the creation of the Tobacco Monopoly in the Regency of Tunis; and when the Local Government administered the Monopoly, or when it was ceded to a contractor, these dealers have always been left in charge of the shops.

Even the present Administration of the Monopoly, organized over a year ago, have acknowledged their right of employment and maintained them up to the present date.

It is only after remonstrances and claims on the part of intolerant French subjects, enemies of every foreign element, especially British, that the Administration of the Monopoly has decided to turn them out in the most unjust and barbarous manner.

I must also add that the claims and remonstrances against the above-mentioned retail dealers of tobacco, as also against all the interests of the British colony in general, have always been encouraged and perhaps fomented by the local authorities.

In the meantime, these dealers have presented themselves in a body, asking me to forward a Report to you on the unjust measure taken against them, and to submit to you what follows:—

1. That as they have enjoyed their employments since the creation of the Monopoly of Tobacco of the Regency, they consider themselves entitled to have the privilege over any other claimants.

2. That as such employment has always been acknowledged by all the different Administrations up to the present, they do not think that the Resident is justified in the present orders, especially as he is unable to point out any bad antecedents in their conduct.

3. That, therefore, they have recourse to you that you may protect them, and take such steps with the Tunisian Government, or whoever it may concern, as to cause that they may continue to enjoy their employment, which is the only trade they can manage, and is the only support of their families, although their profit hardly suffices for their maintenance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. LEONARDI.

Inclosure 3 in No. 1.

Vice-Consul Leonardi to Acting Consul-General Carbonaro.

(Translation.)

Sir,

Sfax, December 4, 1891.

WITH reference to my last despatch dated the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to report to you that the discontent and indignation of the British colony against the French Administration regarding the dismissal of the tobacco agents is daily increasing. They have petitioned me to ask you to interest yourself in the matter, and to obtain from the Administration a revocation of the Order.

The British subjects submit that these acts of the Tunisian Government are a breach of existing Treaty rights between Her Majesty's Government and His Highness the Bey, whereby British subjects enjoy in Tunisia the same privileges and immunities as the most favoured nation.

The dismissal of British employés to be replaced by Frenchmen, therefore, is contrary to the spirit of the said Treaty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. LEONARDI.

Inclosure 4 in No. 1.

Consul R. Drummond Hay to M. Massicault.

M. le Ministre,

Tunis, December 26, 1891.

DURING my absence from Tunis several British subjects at Sfax, employed in the sale of tobacco for the Tunisian Government Monopoly, have complained that they received recent notice to quit on the 1st January next, and that these measures have been taken with a view to replace them either by French or Tunisian subjects.

When the Tobacco Monopoly was taken in the commencement of this year by the Tunisian Government, these persons, then trading under the former monopolists, were, I am given to understand, authorized to continue their business, and, until the issue of the late order to quit, were under the impression that their situations would be permanent.

The peremptory dismissal by the Tunisian Government at the port of Sfax alone of seven respectable British subjects, who have large families to support, and have depended for many years on the tobacco trade as a means of existence, is seriously resented not only by the persons affected by the measure, but by all members of the British community,

whose welfare in this country depends on their treatment by the authorities in a spirit of justice and impartiality.

I inclose a list of the petitioners at Sfax, and I beg to add that there are many similar cases in other parts of the country which merit equal attention.

I trust, M. le Ministre, that in dealing with the question, the Tunisian Government will be pleased to bear in mind the important privileges of British subjects trading in the Regency, and that they will refrain from enforcing a measure which would be totally at variance with the good-will hitherto shown towards British traders.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 5 in No. 1.

M. Regnault to Consul R. Drummond Hay.

M. le Consul-Général,

Tunis, le 31 Décembre, 1891.

PAR lettre du 26 de ce mois, vous avez bien voulu appeler mon attention sur la situation de plusieurs sujets Britanniques employés par l'ancien fermier des tabacs et qui ont été avisés par notre Administration des Finances qu'ils seraient licenciés le 1^{er} Janvier.

J'ai l'honneur de vous faire observer que le Gouvernement Tunisien ne pouvait pas être tenu de conserver à son service les agents du fermier des tabacs et que ces anciens débiteurs ne sauraient être assimilés à des commerçants jouissant de privilèges quelconques.

J'ajoute que l'Administration des Monopoles a ménagé grandement les intérêts de ce personnel, en lui donnant un délai d'un an pour trouver un emploi.

Agréez, &c.
(Pour le Résident-Général et par autorisation)
Le Consul de France,
(Signed) E. REGNAULT.

Inclosure 6 in No. 1.

Vice-Consul Leonardi to Consul R. Drummond Hay.

(Translation.)

Sir,

Sfax, January 6, 1892.

IN conformity with your instructions transmitted to me by your despatch of the 2nd instant, I have made diligent inquiries with regard to the time and form of the notice to quit issued by the Monopoly to the tobacco dealers, and I have ascertained the following particulars:—

1. The tobacco dealers knew nothing about the decision of the Government, and it was only a few days before the end of the year that they received formal notice to quit.

2. The notice was given to them verbally by the "Directeur," who had called them expressly for such a communication.

3. On the 31st December the Director verbally ordered them to deliver their deposit of tobacco either to him or to the persons who were going to take their places; and after having rendered their accounts they were asked to sign a declaration, which they think concerns the final liquidation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. LEONARDI.

Inclosure 7 in No. 1.

Vice-Consul Galea to Consul R. Drummond Hay.

(Translation.)

Sir,

Sfax, January 6, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 28th December last with reference to the British subjects who formerly kept shops for the sale of tobacco with the permission of the contractor, and were confirmed in their posts by the Director

of the Government Monopoly since the 1st January, 1891, and dismissed at the end of the year.

Names of the persons dismissed:—

Giuseppe Fenech, dealer in tobacco at Cala Zghira.	
Giuseppe Rizro	" Cala Grande.
Lorenzo Rizro	" Sidi-el-Heni.

With regard to Giuseppe Fenech, he had been in the service of the contractor for about twelve years, and six months ago the French authorities asked him to take the usual oath, and in fact he made an affidavit which he delivered; but, contrary to the promise made to him that he would be left in charge of the sale of tobacco and salt, he received orders to give up the tobacco and salt. He is at present out of employment after twelve years' service.

Tobacco cutters dismissed:—

Carmelo Falzon was summoned to Tunis with the tools for cutting, and for the last three months he has been waiting to be employed again. All his tools have been taken away from him.

Vincenzo Borg and Salvatore Aguilina. The tools of these persons have also been taken away from them, and they also are waiting at Tunis for their employment. These three persons are deluded with the hope of being admitted again to their employment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. GALEA.

Inclosure 8 in No. 1.

Mr. Portelli to Consul R. Drummond Hay.

(Translation.)

Sir,

Monastir, January 7, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to report, for your information, that in the beginning of this year all the British subjects employed by the Monopoly of Tobacco during the last fifteen years have been dismissed and replaced by French subjects.

The above-mentioned British subjects are the brothers Pasquale and Ignazio Gami, the fathers of large families, and against whose conduct no remarks could be produced as they have always scrupulously served the Monopoly.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. PORTELLI.

Inclosure 9 in No. 1.

Note of the British Subjects who kept Shops at Sfax for the sale of Tobacco and received orders to quit on the 1st January, 1892.

ANGIOLINO FARRUGIA, a family of twelve persons. The mother is a widow and during the last thirty years this family has always been engaged in the sale and manufacture of tobacco.

Vincenzo Pulomeni, a family composed of mother, father, and three children. Their trade and only means of livelihood during the last twenty-five years have been the manufacture and sale of tobacco.

Antonio Diacono has been employed in this trade as dealer in tobacco for the last fifteen years and is almost deprived of sight. He supports seven young nephews.

Carmelo Vella has been employed in cutting and selling tobacco during the last thirty years and supports a family composed of five persons including father and mother.

Giuseppe Vella, dealer in tobacco, supports five persons—brothers, mother, and wife—and has been engaged in this business for the last fifteen years.

Angiolino Desira, tobacco dealer for the last sixteen years, supports a family consisting of mother, widow, and five brothers.

Vincenzo Pace, employed in the sale of tobacco during the last twenty years, supports a family of three persons.

No. 2.

Consul R. Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 5.)

My Lord,

Tunis, January 18, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 2 of the 5th instant, and No. 38 of the 11th August, 1891, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the question of the establishment of a Court of Appeal at Tunis was discussed at the Conference held at the Residency in November last, when M. George Picot, of Paris, Delegate of the Syndicate of French Colonists, submitted a Report of the Committee appointed during the last Session to inquire into this matter.

M. Picot's scheme, which was carried by a large majority of votes, proposes that the French Government be requested to send periodically to Tunis a President, four Assessors ("Conseillers"), and an Advocate-General belonging to the Court of Appeal at Algiers, who would be instructed by the "Garde des Sceaux" to remain at Tunis during the time that might be deemed necessary for the adjudication of the cases in appeal, and to return to Algiers on the termination of the Assizes.

Several members of the Conference were strongly in favour of the establishment of a permanent and autonomous Court of Appeal for Tunisia, but M. Picot, in his reply, explained that the time had not yet arrived for the French Government to accede to such demands.

He stated that a careful study of the judicial statistics had shown that there was considerable progress in the number of cases brought before the Court of Appeal at Algiers, but that they had only reached 108 during the year 1890, and until the number of cases should exceed 300, he believed that the consent of the French Parliament would not be obtained for the establishment of a fixed Court of Appeal at Tunis.

I beg to inclose a cutting from the "Dépêche Tunisienne" of the 25th November last,* which contains a full record of M. Picot's address to the Conference on this subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 3.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 26.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 27, 1892.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Tunis, and of its inclosures,† detailing the circumstances under which certain British subjects, engaged as tobaccoists, have been thrown out of employment through their dismissal by the Tunisian Government.

It appears from the correspondence that these persons were served with no official warning of the fact that their engagement would terminate on the 1st instant, until the end of last month, when they received a verbal notice to quit from the French agent of the Government Monopolies.

I have to request that you will represent to the French Government the hardship entailed by these measures upon a large number of respectable and unoffending persons, subjects of a friendly nation, and that you will call M. Ribot's special attention to the absence of due notice of dismissal such as is customary in similar cases—an omission which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, gives the persons injured an equitable claim to compensation.

You will note that the French Resident denied their claim to compensation on the ground that they had had a year's warning, and thereby acknowledged that they were considered to be entitled to that notice.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

* Not printed.

† No. 2.

No. 4.

Foreign Office to Consul R. Drummond-Hay.

(No. 1.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 27, 1892.

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to convey to you his Lordship's approval of your proceedings in connection with the dismissal of certain British subjects employed by the Tunisian Government, as reported in your despatch No. 3 A of the 12th instant.

I am, &c.

(Signed) P. CURRIE.

No. 5.

Consul R. Drummond-Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 9.)

(No. 9.)

My Lord,

Tunis, February 2, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 3 A of the 12th ultimo, Mr. Galea, British Vice-Consul at Susa, states that a dealer in tobacco, named Emenuela Diacono, British subject, whose services were retained by the Tunisian Government at the time Mr. Galea reported on the case, was the holder of an "Amai Bey," or Beylical letter, authorizing him to sell tobacco. This letter was lately demanded by the authorities, and unsuspectingly surrendered by Diacono. On the 20th January he was turned out and replaced by a Tunisian subject.

This, as the Vice-Consul observes, is a good example of the mode of procedure adopted by the Tunisian authorities for ridding themselves of tobacco dealers who happen to be neither French nor Tunisian subjects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND-HAY.

No. 6.

Consul R. Drummond-Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 16.)

(No. 10.)

My Lord,

Tunis, February 10, 1892.

WITH reference to Sir T. H. Sanderson's despatch No. 11, of the 17th October last, and to my despatch No. 2 of the 5th ultimo, reporting to your Lordship the departure of M. Massicault for Paris, with the intention of submitting to the French Government proposals for the introduction of reforms in the administration of the Regency by the Government of the Protectorate, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith an extract from the "Dépêche Tunisienne" of the 5th December last, which contains a record of the opinion of a Committee appointed to report on the extension of the competence of French Tribunals in questions relating to real property. The Report was read by M. George Picot before the Conference of French subjects held on the 10th November last, who passed a Resolution that "it is urgent to extend with the least possible delay the competence of French Tribunals in all matters relating to real property where a European or a protected European may be involved."

The French Resident, who presided at the meeting, informed the members that he had reasons for believing that the realization of this reform will not be delayed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND-HAY.

Inclosure in No. 6.

Extract from "La Dépêche Tunisienne" of December 5, 1891.

CONFÉRENCE CONSULTATIVE.

Séance du 20 Novembre, 1891 (suite).

Extension de la Compétence des Tribunaux Français en Matière Immobilière.

M. PICOT lit le Rapport de la Commission :—

"Rapport sur l'Extension de la Compétence des Tribunaux Français en Matière Immobilière.

"Messieurs,

"Votre Commission d'Administration, saisie d'un vœu en faveur de l'extension de la compétence des Tribunaux Français en matière immobilière, vous propose à l'unanimité de persister dans ce vœu et de confirmer le vote émis en Janvier dernier.

"Au Rapport si complet présenté à la précédente Session par M. Terras, s'est ajouté récemment le Rapport de la troisième Sous-Commission des frais de justice sur les projets relatifs à la compétence des juridictions Française et Tunisienne.

"Ces documents résument avec autorité une question technique qui serait difficile à faire comprendre, si chacun de vous n'avait, par son expérience personnelle, le souvenir de conflits, d'attributions dont il aurait été témoin ou victime.

"Tel est dans toute société jeune ou vieille, le besoin de justice que de toutes les vexations, la plus cruelle est la lutte prolongée entre deux compétences qui a pour effet d'ajourner et quelquefois de supprimer le droit. Sous l'ancien régime, en France, les juriconsultes étaient nombreux, leur mérite hors de pair, leur voix écoutée, les Parlements possédaient des Magistrats éminents, mais à travers le conflit des compétences multipliées, le droit était souvent étouffé. Notre Révolution de 1789 n'a pas fait le droit; elle lui a, passez-moi l'expression, donné de l'air et du jour; elle l'a affranchi ou du moins elle a diminué le nombre de ces déclinatoires qui sont le plus mortel ennemi de ce que le droit a pour mission de défendre: la propriété et la liberté.

"Nous nous plaignons de ce qu'en Tunisie, entre les deux Justices Française et Tunisienne, le droit soit parfois étouffé, que l'administration de la justice, ralentie par les exceptions, soit entravée dans sa marche.

"Fixons les points indiscutés, nous voyons par là combien est large le champ ouvert aux conflits.

"Compétence Française: toute action intentée au sujet d'une propriété immatriculée.

"Compétence Tunisienne: toute action relative à une propriété non immatriculée possédée ou réclamée par un Tunisien.

"Entre ces deux termes extrêmes, que de questions mixtes! Que d'espèces douteuses! Une terre non immatriculée est possédée par un Européen; un Tunisien l'assigne en revendication devant le Tribunal Français; la cause est plaidée, puis jugée. La Cour saisie d'un appel déclare que l'incompétence est d'ordre public, que le Tunisien en plaçant devant les Tribunaux Français n'a pu y renoncer et que d'office la cause est renvoyée devant le Châra.

"Cette jurisprudence, il est vrai, semble vacillante et on relève certains Arrêts qui font espérer qu'elle sera définitivement abandonnée; mais, en attendant, quelles lenteurs! combien de doutes et surtout que de frais pour les justiciables!

"Il serait facile de multiplier le tableau des abus qui découlent d'une telle incertitude: l'esprit de chicane développé au détriment de tous les intérêts, la menace incessante de procès qui mettent en question les droits les mieux assis, l'irritation produite par des conflits sans issue sont des faits graves d'où peuvent sortir de véritables périls.

"Quel remède pouvons-nous y apporter?

"Hâter l'immatriculation, disent certaines personnes, et ne demander qu'à cette mesure, rendue obligatoire, la réforme des abus.

"Nous sommes, plus que personne, partisans de l'immatriculation; nous souhaitons que ce grand travail, digne de servir de modèle, soit encouragé par tous les moyens; nous applaudissons aux projets qui nous ont été communiqués. Nul doute que l'extension de ce régime, en fixant irrévocablement les limites des terres, ne soit destinée à tarir la source des procès immobiliers.

"Mais, en cette matière, il y a une règle de sage conduite qui doit être, sous le Gouvernement du Protectorat, un principe absolu.

" Il ne faut rien demander à la coercition quand la faculté donnée aux intéressés peut suffire.

" Or, le mouvement qui porte les propriétaires vers l'immatriculation est considérable ; ils sentent de plus en plus l'importance des sécurités que cette mesure confère. Cent mille hectares seront, avant peu, immatriculés. Une foule de propriétaires attendent l'abaissement du tarif pour introduire leurs demandes. Où l'initiative suffit à déterminer un courant, il serait très imprudent de décréter l'obligation.

" D'ailleurs, à un point de vue tout pratique, la valeur de ce travail qui purge la propriété de tous les litiges occultes qui la menaçaient, dépend exclusivement du soin minutieux du Service Topographique et du zèle du Tribunal Mixte. Brusquer l'immatriculation serait lui enlever tout son mérite.

" Il faut donc prendre les choses, non telles qu'elles seront dans dix ans, mais telles qu'elles se présentent en 1891.

" Tout bien considéré, le véritable abus est de forcer un Européen à comparaître, malgré lui, devant un Tribunal Indigène.

" Telle est la formule à laquelle s'est arrêtée votre Commission d'Administration. Toute réforme qui mettra fin à une compétence abusive sera accueillie avec reconnaissance.

" Avant le Protectorat, la juridiction des Consuls ne laissait pas prise au doute. Vous vous souvenez que votre Rapporteur, en Janvier dernier, vous rappelait que Mustapha Kasnadar, alors Premier Ministre, revendiquant sur la famille Gandolphe la maison qu'elle habitait, portait sa demande devant le Tribunal Consulaire de France.

" Proclamer sur ce point le droit de tout Européen de n'être jugé comme défendeur que devant un Tribunal Français, nous paraît un retour à la vérité.

" Il nous semble indispensable d'aller plus loin. Un Européen est demandeur : il prétend qu'une partie de sa terre a été usurpée par un voisin indigène. C'est un acte de violence, une sorte de vol qui serait réprimé par la loi pénale, s'il s'appliquait à un objet mobilier. L'Européen devra-t-il se rendre devant le Tribunal Indigène ?

" L'Européen qui possède un titre de propriété et qui entend le faire valoir sera-t-il forcé d'aller devant le Châra ?

" Nous demandons qu'il puisse être admis au Tribunal Français et qu'en aucun cas il ne soit forcé de s'adresser à la procédure et aux Tribunaux Indigènes.

" Un point demeure obscur.

" Le Tunisien qui a accepté la compétence Française en plaçant devant le Tribunal contre un Français, pourra-t-il décliner cette compétence devant la Cour d'Appel ?

" La Commission d'Administration est unanime à penser que l'incompétence doit être soulevée par le Tunisien à l'origine de l'instance *in limine litis* et qu'après le procès engagé et la compétence acceptée, elle ne peut être déclinée.

" Ainsi la question se trouverait réglée, les conflits apaisés et les satisfactions légitimes obtenues.

" Votre Commission, se fondant sur ces motifs, a exprimé à l'unanimité le vœu suivant qu'elle vous propose de sanctionner :—

" Il est urgent d'étendre, dans le plus bref délai possible, la compétence des Tribunaux Français à toutes les matières immobilières, toutes les fois qu'un Européen ou un protégé Européen se trouverait en cause."

" Le Rapporteur,
(Signé) " G. PICOOT.

" Tunis, le 20 Novembre, 1891."

Les conclusions de la Commission sont adoptées.

M. Terras demande l'adjonction aux conclusions de cette Commission des mots : " Rétirant l'avis déjà donné dans sa dernière Session."

M. le Rapporteur accepte cette adjonction.

Le Résident Général dit qu'il y a lieu de croire que cette réforme ne tardera pas à être réalisée.

M. de Carnières renouvelle la demande qu'il a faite à la dernière Session en vue d'étendre la compétence des Tribunaux Français à tous les procès immobiliers, quelle que soit la nationalité des ayants cause. On conçoit, en effet, les inconvénients qu'il y a à ce que le régime légal auquel est soumis un immeuble varie avec la nationalité de ses propriétaires.

M. le Résident Général demande à M. de Carnières d'abandonner pour le moment ce vœu et de se contenter de l'extension de compétence réclamée par la Commission.

M. Georges Picot déclare que la Commission repousse la proposition de M. de Carnières.

M. de Carnières n'insiste pas.

No. 7.

Consul R. Drummond-Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 22)

(No. 11.)

My Lord,

Tunis, February 15, 1892.

WITH reference to the last paragraph of my despatch No. 29 of the 2nd July, 1891, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Italian Consul-General has received a Report from his Agent at Gabes that the French authorities have opened a weekly market at Tataouin, on the Tripolitan frontiers, where they have established free kitchens for the natives of Ghadames, who now frequent the market.

When these people return to their country, the authorities at Tataou present them with guns, swords, and daggers, &c. It is alleged that these steps have been taken by the French for the purpose of attracting the Ghadames merchants, and of thus diverting, by degrees, the trade routes of the Tripolitan Oasis in favour of Tunisia.

A report is also current that the military authorities have succeeded, by friendly overtures, in securing the allegiance to the Beylical Government of several Tripolitan tribes bordering on the province of the Ouderna.

Judging from the geographical position of these territories situated on the road to Ghadames, and considering the means adopted by the French to gain over the wild border tribes and to allure the Ghadames traders into the Regency, there is every reason for concluding that, in due course of time, the Government of the Protectorate will succeed in establishing a regular trade with that coveted oasis, and in thus extending French influence to the vast regions which form the "hinterland" of Southern Tunisia, and especially of Tripolitania.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND-HAY.

No. 8.

Consul R. Drummond-Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 13.)

My Lord,

Tunis, February 15, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith an extract from the "Dépêche Tunisienne" of the 12th instant,* regarding Bizerta, and to point out the concluding remark of the editor that the article of the "Indépendance Belge" has been written "under the erroneous impression that a naval port will be constructed at Bizerta, and not a commercial port, as is the sole object and intention of the Beylical Government."

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND-HAY.

No. 9.

Consul R. Drummond-Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 27.)

(No. 14.)

My Lord,

Tunis, February 20, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a translation of a letter from Mr. G. Pariente, British Consular Agent at Gorba, submitting a complaint of Messrs. Farrugia and Camilleri against the local authorities of that place for violation of domicile, the police having entered and searched the premises of the British subjects without the knowledge or consent of the British Consular Agent.

In reply to Mr. Pariente, I referred to a letter I had addressed him in March 1891, regarding a similar question, when, in accordance with the tenour of Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 45 of the 2nd August, 1889, I acquainted him that the police are authorized by the French Tribunals to act in the execution of Tunisian laws, and the French Code of Civil and Criminal Procedure, and that, therefore, they are responsible alone towards those Tribunals by which they are authorized to execute judgments on foreigners without the previous consent of the Consular authorities.

I added that it was open to Messrs. Farrugia and Camilleri to apply to the

* Not printed.

competent Tribunals for redress, if they considered that the police authorities had exceeded their powers, or that the accusations of the French citizen were unfounded.

I beg to inclose copies of my letters to Mr. Pariente of the 14th March, 1891, and of the 6th instant, and to state that I have deemed it advisable to lay this matter before your Lordship, in consequence of the last paragraph of the Consular Agent's letter, where he informs me that the British subjects do not intend to relinquish their claim for the redress to which they consider themselves entitled through my intervention on their behalf.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 9.

Mr. Pariente to Consul R. Drummond Hay.

(Translation.)

Sir,

Gerba, January 26, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram of the 22nd instant, worded as follows:—

"The families of Farrugia and Camilleri, who live together, have had this morning their domicile and their stores visited by the French Vice-Consul, acting as 'Juge de Paix,' accompanied by a 'Huissier,' without the consent or the intervention of the Consular Agency. These families, who are very honourable, protest against the violation of their domicile, and the disturbance of their wives, one of whom is with child, and request me to inform you of the case.

In addition to my telegram, I beg to inform you that the search made in the domicile and stores of Messrs. Farrugia and Camilleri, who live together, forming a very respectable family, was made in consequence of an alleged theft of about 2,300 piastres in cash, which occurred about a month ago, to the prejudice of a certain M. David Spiteri, a naturalized French subject.

On the 18th December last M. Spiteri left for Gabes, leaving the keys of his store (office) in the hands of a M. Enrico Aubacher, employed by him for the sale of tobacco. At the same time he had begged M. Giuseppe Farrugia, his friend, as a favour to assist at the measurement of certain oil jars, together with Jusuf-ben-Ashour, agent of the oil tax, Mohamed Hmish, Salem-ben-Randan, and Giuseppe Camilleri, the latter being employed in registering the oil presses before filling the jars.

It was further arranged that this inspection should take place in Spiteri's store. The key was deposited each time with M. Aubacher.

On Monday, the 21st December, the jars were examined in the presence of all the above-mentioned persons, and the key of the store was regularly delivered to Aubacher.

On Thursday, the 24th December, six further jars were examined by the same persons, and the key was again handed over to Aubacher.

On Saturday, the 20th December, M. Spiteri returned from Gabes. The next day, Sunday the 27th, he declared that, during his absence, the sum of 2,300 piastres in gold, silver, and two bank notes of 100 fr. each, had been stolen from the drawer of a table which served as a desk, and where, according to his statement, he had left the money, instead of placing it in the iron safe lying in his store. The key was in his own possession.

M. Spiteri had recourse to the Acting Juge de Paix, and threw suspicion on the Clerk, Enrico Aubacher, suspecting also the very honest and respected Mr. Giuseppe Farrugia.

After a few days an inquiry was instituted without result; and now, after nearly one month of silence, the famous search in the domicile and stores of Messrs. Farrugia and Camilleri took place. I cannot say for what reason, as the thing stolen consisted in ready cash.

The French Vice-Consul, Acting as "Juge de Paix," accompanied by his Secretary, acting as "Huissier," and by the Inspector of Police, presented themselves at Farrugia and Camilleri's dwelling on Friday morning, the 22nd instant, without giving notice to this Consular Agency at all, nor asking for the presence of a Consular janissary according to the custom hitherto practised, in order to avoid the implication of the violation of a private domicile.

Mr. Giuseppe Farrugia, however, who did not know at first what was meant, admitted those functionaries into his drawing-room. When they informed him that

they intended to have the house searched, he stated that he ignored the formalities that should be observed on such occasions, and requested them to commence by giving notice to the British Consular Agent. To this the "Huissier" replied: "Our orders are to make a search, and we know nothing else."

After the search in the house and stores had taken place, Mr. Giuseppe Farrugia presented himself in this Consular Agency, and related to me all the particulars of this uncalled-for judicial procedure, which he considered an undeserving and arbitrary violation of domicile. He requested me to inform you by telegram of what happened, for your wise consideration, that you may obtain adequate satisfaction, the more so as the unjust proceedings of the judicial authorities had surprised and pained his family, and besides seriously alarming Mrs. Farrugia, who is in an interesting condition.

The families of Farrugia and Camilleri are land-owners of exemplary character, well known to all. They feel that their self-respect, honour, and moral reputation have been attacked by such a procedure, the result of which, however insignificant, is considered to be a scandal which caused a bad impression on the public.

Therefore, in placing before you these unpleasant facts, Messrs. Farrugia and Camilleri do not intend to relinquish their claim for redress to which they consider themselves entitled, with your valued assistance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. PARIENTE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 9.

Consul R. Drummond Hay to Mr. Pariente.

(Translation.)

Sir,

Tunis, March 14, 1891.

I HAVE received your letter of the 26th ultimo, informing me that the agents of the local police of Gerba have entered the domicile of a British subject without your knowledge or consent, and reporting to me that in consequence thereof you had made remonstrances to the French Vice-Consul.

In reply to your request to be furnished with instructions for your future guidance in such cases, I have to inform you that, whilst I approve your endeavours to uphold the usages of your Consular district in the interests of British subjects, I must request you to bear in mind the following opinion of Her Majesty's Government on questions of a similar character that have arisen in Tunisia.

The police are authorized by the French Tribunals to act in the execution of Tunisian Laws and the French Codes of Civil and Criminal Procedure, and therefore they are responsible alone towards those Tribunals by which they are authorized to execute judgments on foreigners without the previous consent of the Consular authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 9.

Consul R. Drummond Hay to Mr. Pariente.

(Translation.)

Sir,

Tunis, February 6, 1892.

WITH reference to your despatch, dated the 26th ultimo, regarding an alleged violation of domicile by the police authorities of Gerba, I have to refer you, in reply, to my letter of the 14th March, 1891, wherein I explained to you the views taken by Her Majesty's Government in cases of a similar character that have already occurred in the Regency.

You may inform the Farrugia and Camilleri families that if they consider that the authorities have exceeded their legal powers, or that M. David Spiteri's accusations are unfounded, they should have recourse to the competent Tribunals for damages and satisfaction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 79.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 3, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 55 of the 13th ultimo, in which I reported having addressed a representation to the French Government detailing the hardships entailed on British subjects lately dismissed from employment as tobaccoists by the Tunisian Government, I am confidentially informed by M. Hanotaux that, as a special favour, but not as a principle which could be appealed to by other Representatives, M. Massicault has orders to consider favourably the cases of the British subjects thus dismissed respecting whom I have made representations, and to give satisfaction to their claims if well founded.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

Consul R. Drummond-Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 7.)

(No. 17.)

My Lord,

Tunis, March 1, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 11 of the 5th ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Italian Agent here has received a cypher telegram from his Vice-Consul at Gerbe, who is also British Consular Agent, reporting the arrest by the Turkish police, on the Tripolitan frontiers, of a French military interpreter, named Kaddur, detected, on his way to Ghadames, disguised as an Arab. He is stated to have been bound and conveyed to Tripoli. The Franco-Tunisian authorities were greatly concerned at the news.

Immediately after this incident the Italian Consular Agent at Gabes reported that a French explorer, named Carot, who had left for Zargis with the intention of starting from that place for Ghadames with an armed native escort, had been arrested on the Tripolitan frontiers by the Tunisian military authorities, and compelled to retract his steps, after signing a declaration that he would make no further attempts to cross the frontiers. He afterwards arrived at Gabes, escorted by Tunisian mounted police.

This display of energy on the part of the Tunisian authorities, following so soon upon the arrest of Kaddur by the Turkish police, when proceeding in disguise to Ghadames, would appear to arise from a desire on their part to disavow any participation in the proceedings of their military interpreter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND-HAY.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 47.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 7, 1892.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 79 of the 3rd instant, I have to request that you will express to the French Government the satisfaction with which Her Majesty's Government have received their friendly assurances respecting the case of the British subjects lately dismissed from employment by the Government of Tunis.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

Foreign Office to Consul R. Drummond Hay.

(No. 8.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 8, 1892.

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to convey to you his Lordship's approval of your action in regard to the complaint of Messrs. Farrugia and Camilleri

against the authorities of Gerbe, as reported in your despatch No. 14 of the 20th ultimo.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 94.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 14, 1892.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 47 of the 7th instant, I took an opportunity to-day of expressing to M. Hanotaux the satisfaction with which Her Majesty's Government had received the friendly assurances of the French Government respecting the case of the British subjects lately dismissed from employment by the Government of Tunis.

M. Hanotaux said he was glad I had taken that mode of thanking his Government instead of writing an official note on the subject. The matter had been arranged confidentially between himself and M. Massicault; and the concession which had been made was not to constitute a precedent. He would again specially recommend the case to the Resident's favourable treatment, and proceeded to take a note about it in my presence.

I have, &c.

(Signed) E. C. H. PHIPPS.

Consul R. Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 17.)

(No. 18.)

My Lord,

Tunis, March 10, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 2 of the 5th January, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that M. Massicault returned here yesterday from Paris.

M. Regnault, who has frequently taken charge of the Residency, and has for several years held important posts in the Regency, has been appointed French Consul at the Piræus. He is succeeded by M. Blondel, Secretary of Embassy, who has been employed in the Protectorate Department of the French Foreign Office and also in Morocco.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Consul R. Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 24.)

(No. 20.)

My Lord,

Tunis, March 18, 1892.

IN consequence of the erroneous and misleading telegrams that have been lately published in certain British and Italian newspapers with regard to Bizerta, I beg to inform your Lordship that the garrison of that place consists only of 200 Zouaves and a detachment of artillery. There is, however, sufficient space in the barracks for about 3,000 men.

I am not aware of any intention on the part of the authorities to increase the garrison for the present, and I am assured by Mr. Bourke that no military works have been commenced on the sites selected for the fortifications, as reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 69 of the 28th October, 1890, nor has he any knowledge of the alleged arrival of siege guns for the defence of the port.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY

No. 17.

Consul R. Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 21.)

My Lord,

Tunis, March 23, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 10 of the 10th February last, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of three Royal Decrees of the 15th and 16th instant, introducing certain modifications in the Law of the 1st July, 1845, relating to the immatriculation of real property, reducing the fees in connection with immatriculation, and establishing a new Law concerning the sale of real property in Tunis by order of the French Tribunal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 18.

Consul-General R. Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 11)

(No. 24. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tunis, April 2, 1892.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 4, Confidential, of the 18th ultimo, I inquired of M. Massicault yesterday whether he was inclined to reconsider the cases of the British subjects who had been dismissed from their employments as tobaccoists by the Tunisian Government. He replied that when in Paris he had heard that Mr Egerton had made representations on the subject.

On being asked at the French Foreign Office for his opinion, he had stated that the British subjects had no lawful grounds for complaint against the Tunisian Government. That when the latter took charge of the Monopoly, the tobaccoists were engaged for a term of one year ending the 31st December, 1891, and that under the existing Regulations the employment of Agents who are neither Tunisian nor French subjects is undesirable.

He considered that the Government had acted as generously as could be expected by retaining the services of the British subjects for a whole year.

The Resident added that since his return to Tunis he had made an official investigation and reported the results to Paris. But he at the same time gave me to understand that if I would agree to regard the question from his point of view, he would be prepared to consider favourably the cases of those British subjects who may have been seriously affected from loss of employment.

During the course of the discussion the Resident questioned the rights of the British subjects to be considered as traders, and as to their places having been filled up by Tunisians and Frenchmen, he maintained that the Tunisian Government could not be restricted in the choice of their Agents.

In reply, I pointed out to M. Massicault that both under the former contractors and under the present arrangements each agent was provided with a quantity of tobacco for sale on behalf of the Monopoly, the agent receiving a percentage on the proceeds of the sale. Under those circumstances it appeared to me that the tobaccoists could only be regarded as traders.

I also reminded M. Massicault of his speech at the conference of French subjects held in November last, when he gave assurances to his fellow-countrymen of the approaching dismissal of a large number of foreigners from employments under the Tunisian Government.

It was not until that announcement was made public in the local newspapers that the British subjects became aware of their fate. Most of them are persons with large families to support who have depended, for periods varying between twelve and twenty years, on the tobacco business for their existence.

I added that the British Vice-Consuls of Sfax, Suse, and Monastir had investigated the case of each individual and had thus ascertained that no warning or notice of any kind had been given to the British subjects that they would be ejected at the end of the year.

As the reports from our respective subordinates appeared to be at variance, I suggested to the Resident that we should defer the discussion until another day, when I would furnish him with full particulars of the inquiries made by the Vice-Consuls,

and I trusted that he would at the same time communicate to me the reports he had received from his officials.

This he agreed to, and expressed to me his desire to discuss the question on an amicable footing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY

No. 19.

Foreign Office to Consul-General R. Drummond Hay.

(No. 5.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 20, 1892.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 24 of the 2nd instant, I am directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to state to you that your language to M. Massicault regarding the dismissal of certain British subjects employed as tobaccoists in Tunis meets with his Lordship's approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 20.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 25.)

(No. 25.)

My Lord,

Tunis, April 19, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the third session of the Conference of French Colonists will take place to-day, under the presidency of M. Massicault, to discuss the proposed reforms and improvements in the administration, public works, finances, and agriculture of the Regency.

I beg to inclose a cutting from "La Dépêche Tunisienne" of the 11th instant,* containing a list of the questions which will occupy the Conference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 21.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 26.)

My Lord,

Tunis, April 24, 1892.

A TELEGRAM from Rome, published here in the French and Italian newspapers "La Dépêche Tunisienne" and "L'Unione" announces that a detailed Report on the works executed by France at Bizerta has been submitted to the Italian Minister for War.

The Report dwells on the strategical importance of Bizerta as a key of the Mediterranean, showing that in two hours a French fleet would be able to occupy an important position on the coast of Sicily or to the south of Malta. In order to guard against such eventualities, the defence of the Sicilian coast is suggested by a special fleet of torpedo-vessels.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 27.)

My Lord,

Tunis, April 26, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 25 of the 19th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the members of the Conference of French Colonists gave a banquet on the 21st instant in honour of M. le Royer, President of the French Senate, and M. Pauliat, Senator, who were on a visit to Tunis.

Amongst the speeches that were made on the occasion, that of M. Pauliat contained some remarkable statements with regard to the Protectorate.

After speaking in flattering terms of the results of French administration during a period of twelve years, M. Pauliat ridiculed the attempts which have been frequently made to agitate in favour of the annexation of Tunisia to Algeria.

In view of the satisfactory results already attained in the Regency, he was no partizan of annexation, but, on the contrary, he was in favour of granting Tunisia greater independence and autonomy than she now enjoys. If, however, annexation should become inevitable, M. Pauliat was of opinion that Algeria ought to be annexed to Tunisia, instead of the latter country to Algeria.

By such a measure the French Budget would economize about 90,000,000 fr., the present yearly cost of Algeria to France.

M. Pauliat then proceeded to draw comparisons between the two administrations, pointing out the grave errors that had been committed in the colonization of Algeria, and predicting a successful development of the resources of the Regency under the present "wise" government of the Protectorate.

M. Pauliat concluded his speech by assuring the members of the Conference that they could count on his sincere support in the French Parliament.

I beg to inclose a record of M. Pauliat's speech, taken from the "Dépêche Tunisienne" of the 23rd instant.*

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 28.)

My Lord,

Tunis, April 29, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 25 of the 19th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the session of the Conference of French Colonists, under the presidency of the Resident, was closed on the 26th instant.

The Report of the proceedings of the Conference has not been published yet but I beg to inclose an extract from the "Journal Officiel Tunisien" of the 28th instant, reporting M. Massicault's concluding address.

In expressing his thanks to the members of the Conference for their valuable counsels, the Resident stated that great financial prudence should be exercised in a country where the construction of a network of railroads, estimated to cost 23,000,000 fr., is at the head of the proposed reforms and improvements to be introduced by the Government of the Protectorate. He added that the public works carried out during the past ten years exceeded an expenditure of 13,000,000 fr., and were proofs of economical Budgets. The surplus of this year, amounting to 6,300,000 fr., would be mainly devoted to the completion of the ports of Tunis and Bizerta.

M. Massicault at the same time assured the members of the Conference that the results of their deliberations would occupy the serious attention of the Government, as forming a programme of the numerous requirements of the country in the work of reorganization.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

* Not printed.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 30.)

My Lord,

Tunis, May 10, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that a local journal, the "Petites Affiches Tunisiennes," published on the 29th ultimo Regulations for the future sale of Beylical property by the Tunisian Government for the encouragement of French colonization, the first condition being that the purchaser should be a French citizen.

This announcement, of which a copy is inclosed, was sharply criticized by the local Italian newspaper, "l'Unione."

M. V. ... the Italian Consul-General, spoke to me on the subject, and informed me that the introduction of such measures by the Tunisian Government would be an infraction of our Treaty rights, but, as the announcement had not appeared in an official organ of the Government, I considered that the "Union" had arrived at too hasty conclusions. It would, therefore, be advisable to inquire of the Resident, verbally, whether there was any foundation for such a report.

On being questioned by M. Machiavelli on the subject, M. Massicault declared there was no truth whatever in the report, and that, in any case, no purchase of land would be accorded to all foreigners in the purchase of land from the Tunisian Government.

These assurances of the Resident are, I beg to state, well worth noting, as I have frequently heard from Consul-General ... that the Tunisian Government by French agents in the service of the Government of the Protectorate to favour their own countrymen in cases of a similar nature.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 24

Extract from the "Petites Affiches Tunisiennes" of April 20, 1892.

LOTS DOMANIAUX.—Nous avons le plaisir de vous adresser ci-joint la liste de quelques lots offerts par l'Etat Tunisien à la colonisation.

Conditions prescrites pour l'acquisition des lots:—

1. Être citoyen Français.
2. Créer une installation sur la propriété et y habiter.
3. Il est défendu de vendre pendant une période de cinq ans sans une autorisation de l'Etat.

1. Parcelle comprise à la culture de l'olivier.

1. Parcelle de 10 hectares environ, à disposition:

A l'usage des colons, à la gare de ce nom:—

1. Parcelle de 10 hectares environ, à Kahir, d'une contenance de 50 hectares propres à la culture de la vigne. Cette parcelle est contiguë à celle de M. Potin, de Paris, et a été achetée 15,000 fr.

2. Deux lots de 40 hectares environ chacun appelés "Metane," convenant également à la culture du blé et à celle de la vigne, chacun de ces lots vaut 2,100 fr.

A l'usage:

Deux parcelles de 40 hectares environ chacune du nom de "Meeha de Duna" et de 10 hectares environ chacune du nom de "Meeha de Duna" et de 10 hectares environ chacune du nom de "Meeha de Duna". Le sol, accidenté, conviendrait bien à la culture de la vigne. La valeur vénale de chacun de ces lots est de 2,400 fr.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 32 Confidential)

My Lord,

Tunis, May 24, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 24 of the 2nd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of a list of the British subjects dismissed

by the Tunisian Government from employment as tobaccoists in the Regency, accompanied by my remarks, which I have transmitted to the French Resident, as agreed at an interview with him on the 13th instant.

The particulars are taken from the Reports of the Vice-Consuls of Suse, Sfax, and Monastir, who were directed to investigate the case of each claimant.

The language held to me by M. Massicault in defence of the Tunisian Government was similar to that which I had the honour of reporting to your Lordship in my last despatch on this question. He also informed me that he was awaiting fresh instructions from Paris.

When I proposed to hand him a list of the dismissed British subjects, M. Massicault inquired whether a demand for compensation would be included in my note. I replied that I trusted he would fairly acknowledge the justice of the claims, and be prepared to afford satisfaction without the necessity for further formalities.

The Vice-Consuls, whose views I have consulted on the subject of compensation, are of opinion that the payment to each tobaccoist of a sum of money representing his average yearly earnings by the trade would be a fair mode of settlement. In such a case the sum required for seventeen British subjects, estimated at 2,000 fr. a-head, would amount to 34,000 fr., or about 1,360*l*.

I beg to submit these suggestions for your Lordship's consideration, and to request that I may be furnished with instructions for my guidance when I next approach the Resident on this question.

I have also to mention that I have added to the list of dismissed British subjects the names of three tobacco-cutters whom I recommended to M. Massicault for re-employment. They appear, from all accounts, to have been harshly treated by the authorities, who confiscated their working implements when they came to Tunis in search of employment, after dismissal from their situations at Suse and Sfax.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 25.

BRITISH Subjects dismissed from employment as Tobaccoists in the Regency of Tunis.

Name.	Place.	Number of Years engaged on the trade.	Family to support.
Angiolino Farrugia	Sfax	30	Widowed mother and eight brothers and sisters.
Vincenzo Colombo	"	25	Wife and three children.
Antonio Diacomo	"	15	Seven nieces. Has fishing-eyeght.
Giuseppe Vella	"	15	Widowed mother, wife and sister.
Carmelo Vella	"	30	Five persons.
Angelino I. Carra	"	15	Widowed mother and five brothers.
Vincenzo Pace	"	20	Wife and two children.
Carmelo Diacomo	Suse	20	Wife and six children.
Luigi Rosso (Salt)	"	13	Wife and six children. Has bad health.
Vincenzo Rosso	Hammet (Suse)	12	Married.
Ann. Maria Miaz	Hammet (Suse)	3	Has it in poor circumstances.
Giuseppe Fenesh	Cas Grande (Suse)	12	Wife and eight children.
Giuseppe Rosso	Kedda (Suse)	5	Bachelor, in poor circumstances.
Carmelo Gulea	Cala Zghira (Suse)	3	Single.
Lorenzo Rosso	Sidi Larbi (Suse)	9	Wife and two children.
Paquale Grauer	Monastir	15	Eight persons.
Ignazio Grauer	"	15	Seven persons.

These British subjects were summarily dismissed from their situations in the commencement of this year without any warning or notice from the authorities. They were at the time gaining reliable incomes, but are now placed in more or less critical positions, and many of them are in poverty.

It stands to reason that persons who have depended for so many years on a particular class of trade for their support would experience considerable difficulty in

discovering new modes of earning a livelihood. The fact that they are all without capital and have not made any savings by the tobacco business, renders their position still more lamentable.

By the dismissal of these persons, seventeen British families, numbering over ninety souls, have been left to struggle for their existence without having merited in the smallest degree such a fate.

The British Tobacco-cutters of Suse and Sfax.

Carmelo Falzon, Vincenzo Borg, and Salvatore Aquilina, of Suse, and Lorenzo Pace, of Sfax, tobacco-cutters, all married and with large families to support, were sent by the Director of the Monopoly of Suse in January 1891 to Tunis for re-employment. After waiting in vain for several months they returned to Suse. Their tobacco-cutting tools were taken from them by the authorities in Tunis, and neither returned nor paid for.

These British subjects, who are reported to be respectable and well-conducted artisans, desire the restitution of the tools and re-employment in their handicraft.

British Consulate-General, Tunis, May 16, 1892

No. 26.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 30)

(No. 31)

My Lord,

Tunis, May 25, 1892

With reference to my despatch No. 23 of the 20th March, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I visited Bizerta last week.

The progress of the undertaking since my last visit in October 1890 is not remarkable, but the works have been steadily carried on, and are being thoroughly executed.

The position of the new canal answers to the plan I laid before your Lordship in my Report of the 28th October, 1890, but the site selected for the eastern jetty is situated about 600 yards to the east of the canal, and not at its mouth, as marked on the plan.

The western breakwater is now about 550 yards in length, and is solidly constructed of large blocks of concrete. A portion of the old canal and the fisheries will be filled up with earth conveyed by dredgers from the new cutting. It is evidently the intention of the contractors to acquire thus a large quantity of land for the construction of the new quarter.

During my stay at Bizerta I was the guest of Mr. Bourke, who pointed out to me two heights selected by the military authorities for the erection of fortifications.

The principal site is within a few hundred yards of Mr. Bourke's residence, commanding the new port and canal, and the other is farther eastward on a lower and above the village of Monastir-el-Djemil, which will be utilized for the defence of the approaches to Bizerta by the Tunis road and the sea-side.

About a year ago an officer of the French Engineers made proposals to Mr. Bourke for the purchase of these sites, sooner or later, when they might be required for military purposes.

All foreigners visiting Bizerta are closely watched by the police, and any one found sketching or photographing the port works, or even the ancient and dilapidated fortifications of the town occupied by a small body of French troops, are invariably checked by the police or soldiery. If suspected of being military officers, they are summoned before the "Juge de Paix" to account for themselves.

This extraordinary vigilance on the part of the authorities has undoubtedly the effect of casting still greater discredit on the assurances of the French that the undertaking is purely commercial.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

* See plan No. 3 in Report of October 1890.

Foreign Office to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

(No. 8.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 3, 1892.

YOUR despatch No 32 of the 24th ultimo, relative to the case of the British subjects dismissed from employment as tobaccoists in Tunis, has been received at this Office, and I am directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to convey to you a general approval of your proceedings as therein reported.

You should endeavour to come to an arrangement with M. Mascacault upon the lines which you suggest, but it would be better to accept somewhat smaller compensation, if by so doing you can effect an immediate settlement, and obviate the necessity for further representations to the French Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 24.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 16.)

(No. 37. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tunis, June 8, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the Sheikh of the Moorish subjects in Tunis was attacked yesterday and assassinated by a large mob of his fellow-countrymen, who accused him of aiding and abetting the Tunisians in the exaction of the "medjba" or poll tax, amounting to 1*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* per head, from which they had been hitherto exempt, enjoying the same privileges as other foreign subjects.

The Sheikh, with whom I was well acquainted, died the same evening from the wounds inflicted on him. He was selected by the authorities last year at my recommendation as an influential member of the Moorish community with a good reputation.

It is now more than a year since an Order was issued by the Tunisian Government to levy the "medjba" on Tripolitans, Fezzanians, and Ghadamese, who are all subjects of the Porte, and on Soudanese and Moorish subjects. The latter have, up to the present time, succeeded in evading the tax by pacific demonstrations and a defiant attitude, but the other communities have yielded to the demands of the authorities.

When the question was first raised a large number of them came to the British Consulate, claiming my intervention in their behalf. I informed the Chiefs that it was out of my power to assist them officially, but, with a view to pacify them, I consented to request the Resident to give them an interview and to listen personally to their grievances.

The Moors in Tunis are composed principally of Berbers and the independent tribes of Soss from the south of Morocco. The majority of them are employed as guards for the protection of farms and plantations in the country, and stores and houses in the towns.

The Tripolitans and Soudanese are at present the mainstay of the French colonists, who employ no other class of labourer in their farms, as they have proved themselves to be far preferable to Europeans and Tunisians from every point of view for agricultural purposes.

Before the French occupation of the Regency all Mussulmans, including the Moors, were treated with regard by the Beylical authorities. It was on rare occasions that they had to appeal to Foreign Consuls for protection from extortion or other forms of persecution. The extension of the hated "medjba" tax to the Moors and all Mussulmans belonging to the adjacent States and independent tribes of the Soudan is an ill-judged and narrow policy of the Government of the Protectorate. Many of them will quit the country, depriving the colonists of useful and indispensable hands, and conveying with them a warning to their brethren against the consequences of French rule.

A Decree was issued by the Bey in 1873 exempting from the "medjba" tax all Tunisians born in the cities of Tunis, Kairwan, and several other towns, and also the Shercefs of Morocco, the Moors of Fez, and Moorish pilgrims proceeding to Mecca.

The Moors were thus partly protected from the tax by that Decree, and also by the fact of their being subjects of a foreign State permitted to reside in the Regency enjoying similar privileges to the subjects of European Powers.

I have on several occasions spoken officially to leading members of the Tunisian Administration expressing regret at these measures and warning them that my experience of the Moorish character gave me reasons for fearing that a forced imposition of the tax might lead to grave disturbances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 20.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 16.)

(No. 38.)

My Lord,

Tunis, June 9, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that, in consequence of the abolition of the gate taxes on cereals, reported in my despatch No. 21, Commissioned of the 27th ultimo, the Moorish subjects of Tunis have been dismissed from their service as gatekeepers. It is reported that only one month's notice, ending on the 1st of this month.

Two of the British subjects, two of whom have been in the service of the Tunisian Government for many years, before the collection of the gate taxes was transferred to the Moors, applied to me to use my influence with the authorities to secure their re-employment. I explained that the same subjects who had adopted French nationality, and the Italian, who had adopted French nationality, had been re-employed by the same authorities.

Under these circumstances, I took up the matter with the French authorities, and the notice of the French Chargé d'Affaires at an interview on the 1st instant. I stated that I could understand that the suppression of the gate taxes on cereals would necessitate the employment of a large number of gatekeepers, but it had been reported that, out of fifteen officials, five Frenchmen had been retained and ten foreigners dismissed by the authorities, of whom three are British subjects.

M. Blondel replied that the Notice issued by the Municipality was a purely a formality which had been issued as the collection of the gate taxes would be handed over to the "Bureau des Contributions Diverses," when several of the foreign subjects would be re-engaged by that Department.

When I remonstrated against the preference given to Frenchmen, M. Blondel remarked that the employment of more Frenchmen would be out of the question as none of the candidates knew Arabic. He begged me to be under no apprehensions as to the British subjects, and made a note of their names for recommendation to the Finance Department.

I beg to inclose a copy of the Memorial of the British subjects, and to acquaint your Lordship that M. Machiavelli, the Italian Consul-General, also spoke to M. Blondel regarding the dismissed Italians, and gave me to understand that he intended reporting the matter to his Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 20.

Petition.

R. Drummond Hay, Esq., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul-General, Tunis.

The humble Petition of the British subjects, Raimondo Halfon, Giovanni Schembri, and Antonio Coschiani,

Humbly sheweth:

THAT Raimondo Halfon was employed by the Tunisian Government with the Direction of the "Revenues Concédés," and served from the 2nd May, 1870, to the 13th May, 1871, from which date to the 13th October, 1884, with the Direction of the

"Contributions Diverses." As on the latter date certain incomes were ceded by the Government to the Municipality of Tunis, he became attached to this institution as Collector of Taxes at the gates. During all the above time his salary was 3,600 piastres (90L) a-year. He is married, and has two daughters.

That Giovanni Schembri was employed by the Tunisian Government on the 24th July, 1872, at the "Revenues Concedés," and from that place was transferred to the "Contributions Diverses." His salary has been 2,400 piastres (60L) a-year. He has a wife and seven children.

That Antonio Coschieri was employed with the "Contributions Diverses" in 1887, at 2,400 piastres (60L) a-year. He is a bachelor, but supports his mother and her sister, both widows with several minor children.

That as there has been a reduction in the staff employed as Collectors at the gates of the town in consequence of the cereals being allowed to pass without payment of taxes, the petitioners have been ordered to quit their posts.

The petitioners therefore beg you will kindly interfere in their favour with a view to obtain from the Tunisian Government their employment with the "Directeur des Contributions Diverses," that they may continue to gain an honest living as heretofore.

The above-named Raimondo Halfon obtained in 1880 a "Nicham Istihar" in remuneration of his long and valid services rendered to the Tunisian Government.

The petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

(Signed)

RAIMONDO HALFON.
GIOVANNI SCHEMBRI
A. COSCHIERI.

Tunis, June 8, 1892.

No. 30.

Foreign Office to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

(No. 10.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 20, 1892.

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 38 of the 9th instant, reporting the dismissal, by the Municipality of Tunis, of certain British subjects who had been employed as collectors of the lately abolished gate taxes on cereals.

I am to convey to you his Lordship's approval of the representations which you have made to the French Chargé d'Affaires at Tunis on their behalf.

I am, &c.

(Signed) P. CURRIE.

No. 31

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 40.)

My Lord,

Tunis, June 14, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 31 of the 22nd ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that M. Massicault has succeeded, during his visit to Paris, in effecting a conversion of the Tunisian Debt, whereby the interest has been lowered from 3½ to 3 per cent., and the stock made redeemable in ninety-six years.

It is reported that the sum of money economized by the operation will be employed for the construction of the Tunis-Bizerta railroad.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY

No. 32.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 23. Commercial.)

My Lord,

Tunis, July 4, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a cutting from the "Journal Officiel Tunisien" of the 30th June, 1892, containing Royal Decrees relating to the conversion of the Tunisian Loan.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 32

Extract from the "Journal Officiel Tunisien" of June 30, 1892.

Loi relative à la Célébration du Centenaire de la Proclamation de la République.

LE Sénat et la Chambre des Députés ont adopté,

Le Président de la République promulgue la Loi dont la teneur suit :—

Article 1^{er}. La journée du 23 Septembre, 1892, centenaire de la proclamation de la République, est déclarée fête nationale.

Art. 2. Les crédits nécessaires à la célébration de cette fête seront prélevés sur les ressources générales de l'Exercice 1892.

En particulier, une somme de 20,000 fr. sera allouée au Comité du Centenaire, pour contribuer à l'érection du monument commémoratif de la victoire de Valmy.

La présente Loi, délibérée et adoptée par le Sénat et par la Chambre des Députés, sera exécutée comme Loi de l'État.

Fait à Paris, le 20 Juin, 1892.

(Signé)

CARNOT.

Par le Président de la République

Le Président du Conseil, Ministre de l'Intérieur,

(Signé)

EMILE LOUBET

Le Ministre des Finances,

(Signé)

ROUVIER.

Décret du 9 Juin, 1892 (14 Kanda, 1309).

Langages à Dieu.

NOUS, Ali Pacha Bey, possesseur du Royaume de Tunis,

Considérant que le Gouvernement Français, par application de l'Article II de la Convention conclue avec nous, le 8 Juin, 1883, a garanti l'Emprunt 3½ pour Cent autorisé par notre Décret du 17 Décembre, 1883,

Considérant que, par suite des heureux effets de cette garantie sur le crédit de la Régence, l'annuité affectée au paiement des intérêts et de l'amortissement de l'Emprunt 3½ pour Cent est aujourd'hui suffisante pour gager, sans charge nouvelle, les intérêts et l'amortissement en quatre-vingt-seize ans d'un Emprunt 3 pour Cent;

Considérant que la substitution de cet emprunt au précédent, sans accroître ni modifier la garantie du Gouvernement Français, permettra de réaliser des ressources

nouvelles à employer en travaux d'utilité publique, au commun avantage de la France et de la Régence.

Nous avons pris le Décret suivant

Article 1^{er}. L'emprunt réalisé en obligations 3½ pour Cent amortissables en quatre-vingt-neuf ans, en exécution du Décret du 17 Décembre, 1888, sera converti en un emprunt à réaliser au moyen de l'émission de 396,386 obligations de 500 fr. 3 pour Cent, amortissables dans un délai maximum de quatre-vingt-seize ans, conformément aux indications du Tableau d'amortissement ci-joint.

Le Gouvernement Beylical s'interdit la faculté de rembourser cet emprunt avant l'année 1902.

Art. 2. L'annuité nécessaire pour assurer le service des 396,386 obligations nouvelles 3 pour Cent sera prélevée annuellement sur les revenus de la Régence.

Cette annuité garantie par le Gouvernement Français, sera affectée au paiement des intérêts et à l'amortissement semestriel des 396,386 obligations.

Art. 3. Le tirage au sort des obligations à amortir aura lieu à Paris et sera effectué un mois avant l'échéance de chaque semestre.

La liste des obligations sorties à chacun des tirages sera publiée au "Journal Officiel Tunisien," et au "Journal Officiel de la République Française."

Art. 4. Les porteurs des obligations 3½ pour Cent le 1^{er} Décembre 1890, en exécution du Décret Beylical en date du 17 Décembre, 1888, auront, pendant un délai, qui ne pourra être moindre de dix jours, la faculté de demander le remboursement de leurs titres, à raison de 500 fr. par obligation, et le paiement des arrérages courus jusqu'au jour fixé pour le remboursement.

Art. 5. Les obligations 3½ pour Cent dont le remboursement n'aura pas été demandé dans le délai qui sera fixé, en conformité des dispositions de l'Article précédent seront échangées contre les obligations nouvelles 3 pour Cent. Le montant de la soulte à payer s'il y a lieu, aux porteurs des obligations 3½ pour Cent converties ainsi que la date de l'opération seront ultérieurement déterminés.

Art. 6. Les obligations nouvelles de 500 fr. 3 pour Cent seront émises au cours qui sera fixé au jour de la conversion à effectuer en exécution de l'Article 1^{er} du présent Décret.

Chaque obligation sera munie de coupons, payables par trimestre, à raison de 3 fr. 75 c. par coupon, le 1^{er} Janvier, le 1^{er} Avril, le 1^{er} Juillet, et le 1^{er} Octobre de chaque année.

La jouissance du premier coupon courra à partir du jour fixé pour le remboursement des obligations non converties.

Les coupons et le capital des titres amortis seront payables en Tunisie et en France aux Caisses désignées par le Gouvernement Beylical.

Les obligations désignées par la voie du sort pour être remboursées cesseront de produire intérêt à courir du jour fixé pour ce remboursement.

Art. 7. Les obligations 3 pour Cent émises en exécution du présent Décret seront libellées en Arabe et en Français et porteront le sceau Beylical. Elles seront affranchies de tout impôt, taxe ou retenue, de quelque nature que ce soit, en Tunisie, tant dans le présent que dans l'avenir.

Les arrérages se prescriront par cinq ans à compter de leur échéance.

Art. 8. Les dépositaires légaux ou contractuels d'obligations 3½ pour Cent sont autorisés à effectuer la conversion des titres de cette nature dont les propriétaires ne leur auraient pas fait connaître, cinq jours au moins avant l'expiration du délai mentionné par l'Article 4, qu'ils optent pour le remboursement.

Les obligations 3½ pour Cent affectées à des cautionnements de comptables, pour garantie de leur gestion envers le Gouvernement Tunisien, les communes ou les établissements publics de la Régence, pourront être remplacées, titre pour titre, par des obligations nouvelles 3 pour Cent.

Par dérogation aux dispositions de l'Article 3 du présent Décret, la soulte de conversion qui pourra être due aux ayants droit leur sera remise dans le délai d'un mois après la clôture du délai d'option.

Art. 9. Le bénéfice net à provenir de la conversion sera acquis au Gouvernement Tunisien et employé en travaux extraordinaires d'intérêt public concertés entre le Gouvernement Tunisien et le Résident-Général de la République Française.

Art. 10. Les opérations d'émission, de conversion, et de remboursement autorisées par le présent Décret, auront lieu :

En Tunisie, aux Caisses publiques ou autres, désignées par le Gouvernement Beylical ; en France aux Caisses des banquiers, Sociétés, ou établissements de crédit désignés par le même Gouvernement.

Art 11. Le présent Décret n'aura d'effet qu'après que le Gouvernement Français y aura donné son adhésion.

Vu pour promulgation et mise à exécution, Tunis, le 9 Juin, 1892.

Le Ministre Plénipotentiaire, Résident-Général
de la République Française,
(Signé) J. MASSICAULT.

Conversion de l'Emprunt Tunisien, 1884 (4 pour Cent).

TABLEAU D'AMORTISSEMENT.

(Annexé au Décret du 9 Juin, 1892 (14 Knada, 1309).

Nos. d'Ordre des Tirages	Intérêts	Nombre de Numéros à tirer	Nos. d'Ordre des Tirages	Reste à amortir.	Nombre de Numéros à tirer
1	396,386	1	1	396,386	17
2	396,386	2	2	396,386	17
3	396,386	3	3	396,386	17
4	396,386	4	4	396,386	17
5	396,386	5	5	396,386	17
6	396,386	6	6	396,386	17
7	396,386	7	7	396,386	17
8	396,386	8	8	396,386	17
9	396,386	9	9	396,386	17
10	396,386	10	10	396,386	17
11	396,386	11	11	396,386	17
12	396,386	12	12	396,386	17
13	396,386	13	13	396,386	17
14	396,386	14	14	396,386	17
15	396,386	15	15	396,386	17
16	396,386	16	16	396,386	17
17	396,386	17	17	396,386	17
18	396,386	18	18	396,386	17
19	396,386	19	19	396,386	17
20	396,386	20	20	396,386	17
21	396,386	21	21	396,386	17
22	396,386	22	22	396,386	17
23	396,386	23	23	396,386	17
24	396,386	24	24	396,386	17
25	396,386	25	25	396,386	17
26	396,386	26	26	396,386	17
27	396,386	27	27	396,386	17
28	396,386	28	28	396,386	17
29	396,386	29	29	396,386	17
30	396,386	30	30	396,386	17
31	396,386	31	31	396,386	17
32	396,386	32	32	396,386	17
33	396,386	33	33	396,386	17
34	396,386	34	34	396,386	17
35	396,386	35	35	396,386	17
36	396,386	36	36	396,386	17
37	396,386	37	37	396,386	17
38	396,386	38	38	396,386	17
39	396,386	39	39	396,386	17
40	396,386	40	40	396,386	17
41	396,386	41	41	396,386	17
42	396,386	42	42	396,386	17
43	396,386	43	43	396,386	17
44	396,386	44	44	396,386	17
45	396,386	45	45	396,386	17
46	396,386	46	46	396,386	17
47	396,386	47	47	396,386	17
48	396,386	48	48	396,386	17
49	396,386	49	49	396,386	17
50	396,386	50	50	396,386	17
51	396,386	51	51	396,386	17

Nos. d'Ordre des Tirages.	Reste à amortir.	Nombre de Numéros à tirer.	Nos. d'Ordre des Tirages.	Reste à amortir.	Nombre de Numéros à tirer.
103	310,306	1,690	149	202,096	3,270
104	308,746	1,680	150	199,824	3,330
105	307,066	1,700	151	195,136	3,370
106	305,366	1,730	152	191,26	3,430
107	303,646	1,750	153	188,676	3,480
108	301,888	1,780	154	185,216	3,530
109	300,100	1,800	155	181,686	3,580
110	298,296	1,830	156	178,106	3,630
111	296,466	1,860	157	174,476	3,690
112	294,606	1,890	158	170,796	3,730
113	292,706	1,910	159	167,066	3,800
114	290,806	1,930	160	163,286	3,860
115	288,856	1,970	161	159,456	3,910
116	286,886	2,000	162	155,486	3,970
117	284,876	2,030	163	151,486	4,030
118	282,846	2,070	164	147,446	4,100
119	280,776	2,100	165	143,366	4,150
120	278,686	2,130	166	139,246	4,200
121	276,566	2,160	167	135,086	4,250
122	274,416	2,190	168	130,886	4,310
123	272,236	2,210	169	126,646	4,370
124	269,976	2,240	170	122,366	4,430
125	267,736	2,270	171	118,046	4,490
126	265,476	2,300	172	113,686	4,550
127	263,186	2,330	173	109,286	4,610
128	260,866	2,360	174	104,846	4,670
129	258,516	2,390	175	100,366	4,730
130	256,136	2,420	176	95,846	4,790
131	253,726	2,450	177	91,286	4,850
132	251,286	2,480	178	86,686	4,910
133	248,816	2,510	179	82,046	4,970
134	246,316	2,540	180	77,366	5,030
135	243,786	2,570	181	72,646	5,090
136	241,226	2,600	182	67,886	5,150
137	238,636	2,630	183	63,086	5,210
138	236,016	2,660	184	58,246	5,270
139	233,366	2,690	185	53,366	5,330
140	230,686	2,720	186	48,446	5,390
141	228,016	2,750	187	43,486	5,450
142	225,316	2,780	188	38,486	5,510
143	222,586	2,810	189	33,446	5,570
144	219,826	2,840	190	28,366	5,630
145	217,036	2,870	191	23,246	5,690
146	214,216	2,900	192	18,086	5,750
147	211,366	2,930			
148	208,486	2,960			
	205,586	2,990			
				Total	396,386

Loi portant approbation du Décret Beylical en date du 9 Juin, 1892, concernant la Conversion de la Dette Tunisienne.

Le Sénat et la Chambre des Députés ont adopté,

Le Président de la République Française promulgue la Loi dont la teneur suit

Article 1^{er}. Son Altesse le Bey de Tunis est autorisé à convertir en un Emprunt 3 pour Cent, amortissable dans un délai maximum de quatre-vingt-seize ans, l'Emprunt 3½ pour Cent amortissable en quatre-vingt-dix-neuf ans, garanti par le Gouvernement de la République Française, en vertu de la Loi du 9 Février, 1889.

Art. 2 Est approuvé le Décret Beylical en date du 9 Juin 1892, relatif à la conversion des 347,541 obligations de la Dette du Gouvernement Tunisien.

A partir de la conversion exécutée en vertu de ce Décret, la garantie accordée aux obligations 3½ pour Cent de la Dette du Gouvernement Tunisien, en exécution de la Loi du 9 Février, 1889, est transportée aux 396,386 obligations 3 pour Cent à réaliser dans les conditions visées par le Décret Beylical, en date du 9 Juin, 1892.

Art. 3. La garantie du Gouvernement Français s'exercera pendant quatre-vingt-seize ans, à courir de la conversion autorisée par la présente Loi
Fait à Paris, le 25 Juin, 1892.

(Signé) CARNOT.

Par le Président de la République :

Le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères,

(Signé) RIBOT

Le Ministre des Finances,

(Signé) ROLVIER.

Décret du 20 Juin, 1892 (6 Hujé, 1309)

Louanges à Dieu

Nous, Ali Pacha Bey, possesseur du Royaume de Tunis,

Vu notre Décret du 9 Juin, 1892 (14 Kasda, 1309) ;

Nous avons pris le Décret suivant :

Article 1^{er}. L'émission des 396,386 obligations 500 fr. 3 pour Cent s'effectuera le 12 Juillet, 1892, au taux de 476 fr. 25 c.

Art. 2. Les détenteurs d'obligations 3½ pour Cent de la Dette Tunisienne qui voudront être remboursés devront en faire la demande et effectuer, en même temps, le dépôt de leurs titres du 2 au 12 Juillet, 1892, inclusivement.

Art. 3. Le remboursement des obligations sera exécuté en exécution de l'Article 2 du présent Décret aura lieu à partir du 27 Juillet, 1892.

Art. 4. Les intérêts courus à la date du 27 Juillet, 1892, assignés pour le remboursement des obligations 3½ pour Cent, seront payés en même temps que le capital de ces obligations.

Le montant de tout coupon à échoir qui ne pourrait être représenté sera déduit du capital à rembourser.

Art. 5. Les obligations de la Dette Tunisienne 3½ pour Cent dont le remboursement n'aura pas été demandé dans les délais fixés par l'Article 2 du présent Décret seront échangées, titre pour titre, contre des obligations 3 pour Cent nouvelles portant jouissance du 27 Juillet, 1892.

Cet échange aura lieu à partir du 15 Juillet, 1892.

Au moment de l'échange des titres et indépendamment des intérêts à 2½ pour Cent courus du 1^{er} au 27 Juillet, 1892, il sera payé aux ayants droit une soulte de 23 fr. 75 c. par obligation 3½ pour Cent présentée à l'échange.

Le montant de tout coupon à échoir qui ne pourrait être représenté sera déduit de la somme représentant la soulte à payer.

Il pourra être délivré aux ayants droit des titres provisoires.

La remise des titres définitifs devra s'effectuer au plus tard à partir du 2 Novembre, 1892.

Art. 6. Les opérations à effectuer en exécution du présent Décret seront réalisées en Tunisie : aux Caisse publiques du Gouvernement Beylical, et à la Banque de Tunisie ; en France, aux Caisse dont la désignation sera portée à la connaissance du public par voie d'affiches.

L'expiration du délai pendant lequel les opérations pourront s'effectuer aux Caisse autres que celles du Gouvernement Tunisien sera déterminée par la suite.

Vu pour promulguer le présent Décret, le 20 Juin 1892.

Le Ministre Résident-Général

de la République Française

(Signé) J. MASSICAULT

No 33

Mr. R. Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 44)

My Lord,

Tunis, July 17, 1892.
WITH reference to my despatch No. 38 of the 9th June last, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that the Italian Consul-General and I took the

[411]

I

opportunity yesterday during an informal call at the French Residency, to remind M. Massicault that the claims of the British and Italian gate tax collectors were still unsettled.

The Resident assured us that the matter had not been overlooked, and that he hoped to be able to offer employment to several of the claimants in the Department of "Les Contributions Diverses." In such a case, the situations would be offered to those who mostly needed assistance.

We subsequently discussed the question of compensation for the persons who remained without employment. M. Massicault admitted the demand in principle, and although we did not succeed in arriving at a definite understanding, I have every reason for believing that the matter will not give rise to fresh remonstrances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 34.

Mr. R. Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 46.)

My Lord,

Tunis, July 20, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 42 of the 22nd ultimo, a Biserta correspondent of the Italian newspaper "L'Unione" has reported that the French torpedo-boats from Bone were unable to enter the lake, owing to an accumulation of sand in the old canal. With regard to the new port works, he states that two large dredgers are removing from 3,000 to 3,500 cubic metres daily from the canal and the basin at the entrance of the lake, and that the works are being pushed forward with redoubled activity.

In order to show the importance attached to the undertaking by the French authorities, the correspondent mentions that Biserta was visited last May by eight French Generals, ten Colonels of the Engineers, a General Inspector of Artillery, and several other Staff Officers, all of whom visited the lake and neighbourhood.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 35.

Mr. R. Drummond Hay to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 50.) P.

My Lord,

Tunis, July 29, 1892.

I LEARN from the British Vice-Consul at Biserta that it is rumoured to be the intention of the French Government to annex and incorporate in Algeria that portion of Tunis which lies between the Medjerda River and the frontier of Algeria. This report has met with some credence, as the news is said to have been received by a resident at the port above named from the Vice-President of the French Senate, whose friend he is. The river enters the Mediterranean at the port of Farin, to which it flows from the Algerian frontier. Its course is followed as far as the station of Nayjeleida by the Algerian railway, which is under French management, and from that point will shortly be laid the new line, which will connect it with Biserta.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 36.

Acting Consul-General Maxse to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received August 16.)

(No. 8.) P.

My Lord,

Algiers, August 12, 1892.

I HAVE been unable to find any confirmation of the rumours reported from Biserta, and referred to in your Lordship's despatch No. 5, of the 6th instant, as to the alleged intention of the French Government to annex a portion of Tunisian

territory to Algeria. Indeed, if this report has any foundation in fact, the secret has been well kept. Nothing has transpired from the military or civil authorities, nor, so far as I can discover, have any preparatory steps been taken.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ERNEST R. B. MAXSE.

No. 37.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received September 3.)

(No. 53.)

My Lord,

Tunis, August 27, 1892.

I AM informed by M. Savina, Acting Italian Agent and Consul-General, that he received a telegram on the 24th inst. from the Italian Vice-Consul at Tunis, reporting that several Tunisian border tribes had attacked the Tripolitan Ghibel Nabit for the purpose of pillage. He added there was a rumour that the Tunisians had been secretly incited by the French military authorities of the district to commit the depredations.

The Vice-Consul is forwarding a detailed Report on the subject, which I shall have the honour of communicating to your Lordship when handed to me for perusal by M. Savina.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 38.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 54.)

My Lord,

Tunis, August 30, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 50 of the 27th instant, I have received a Report from Mr. Calleja, British Consular Agent at Gabes, dated the 25th instant, informing me that he had learnt from a reliable source that a conflict had taken place on the frontier between Tunisian troops and Tripolitan tribes, and that the former were killed and several wounded.

Arab traders from Tripoli reported that the frontier tribes were exceedingly alarmed at the French encroachments, and that the Werghamas and Tunisian tribes, who are in the habit of furnishing supplies for a British mission station on the coast, are in a very disturbed state.

Mr. Calleja does not mention where the conflict took place, but I believe that it must have occurred in the direction of Ghibel Nabit, as the Werghamas referred to in his letter are the Tunisian tribes bordering on that district.

In my despatch No. 46 of the 3rd October, 1891, and previous correspondence, I had the honour of reporting on the incursions of the Werghamas and the endeavours of the British and French Governments to secure the submission to the Bay of the Werghamas and the Werghamas, with a view to put an end to the frequent disputes near the frontier of pasturage.

I am of opinion, as reported in my despatch No. 46 of the 15th October, 1891, that the main object of these encroachments on Tripoli is to open up the frontier of the frontier tribes in order to open up the trade routes between Tunisia with the interior of Africa, and especially with the oases of Ghardaia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

P.S. August 31.—M. Blendel, French Chargé d'Affaires, informed me this morning, in answer to my inquiries, that the disturbance which had arisen on the Tripolitan frontier was of a trivial nature, and related to disputes regarding the proprietorship of certain prickly-pear plants claimed by the Tunisian-Onderna tribe.

He assured me that there was no occasion for alarm, and that he hoped the questions would be settled by the native tribunals of the "Shraa."

The Italian Acting Consul-General has just received interesting details on the subject from his Agent at Gabes, which I hope to forward by next mail.

R. D. H.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received September 5.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tunis, September 5, 1892.

IN connection with my despatch No. 56 of the 1st September, I am informed, by telegraph, by our Vice-Consul at Gerbe, that he has visited the frontier and satisfied himself that grave disturbances are in progress there. The object of the French military authorities is to occupy Wassen; on each side a force of Arab horse and foot is assembled. I was further informed to-day by a French officer of rank that the Sian tribe, which belongs to Tripoli, had crossed the border into Tunis, in order to avoid being compelled to pay taxes. Thereupon the Tunisian Government were requested by the Wali of Tripoli, through the French Consul-General, to drive the tribe across the frontier again. My informant stated that the Wassen tribe lay claim to territory within the Tunisian boundary; the authorities, however, decline to concede their claims, and insist that they must produce documentary evidence before the Local Court showing their title.

Yesterday the French Resident returned from leave of absence, arriving here unexpectedly.

No. 40.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received September 5.)

(No. 55.)

My Lord,

Tunis, September 1, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 44 of the 17th July, I have the honour to report to your Lordship the settlement of the claims of the British tax-collectors, who demanded either re-employment or compensation for their dismissal from the service of the Tunisian Government, and to inclose, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a letter I have received from the Chargé d'Affaires of the French Resident, communicating to me the amount of compensation accorded to each British subject.

The Italian Consul-General, who acted in concert with me in this question, has agreed to similar terms for the distress of Italian subjects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 40.

M. Blondel to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

M. le Consul-Général,

Tunis, le 20 Avril, 1892.

J'AI eu l'honneur de vous faire connaître, au cours de nos derniers entretiens, que le Gouvernement Tunisien était disposé à accorder, à titre de compensation, aux anciens employés des postes de Tunis, licenciés par suite de la suppression de leurs emplois.

Je suis heureux de vous annoncer que les dispositions sont prises pour que ceux de vos nationaux, dont les noms suivent, puissent toucher, dès les premiers jours du mois prochain, les sommes indiquées ci-dessous:—

Ils recevront, à cet effet, des mandats établis à leur nom: M. Schembri, 720 fr.; M. Halson, 1,080 fr.; M. Conhieri, 480 fr.

Ces sommes représentent, pour les deux premiers, six mois; pour le troisième, quatre mois de leur ancien traitement.

Je vous serais obligé de vouloir bien porter ces dispositions à la connaissance des intéressés.

Agrées, &c.

Le Chargé d'Affaires de France.

(Signé) G. BLONDEL.

No. 41.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received September 6, 12:50 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tunis, September 6, 1892, 10 A.M.

MY telegram dated 5th September

According to a report from the Italian Consul at Gabes, 1,200 Tunisians have occupied Wassen, which belongs to Tripoli. Although the Turkish military authorities have offered no opposition, they have protested against the occupation. The Vice-Consul believes in the authenticity of this information.

No. 42.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received September 8.)

(No. 56.)

My Lord,

Tunis, September 1, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 54 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a translation of a letter received by the Italian Acting Consul-General from his Agent at Gabes relating to the recent disturbances in the Tripolitan frontier, a letter which is of considerable importance in view of the statements of the French Chargé d'Affaires, as reported in a postscript of my last despatch on this subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed)

R. DRUMMOND HAY

Inclosure in No. 42

Italian Consular Agent at Gabes to Italian Acting Consul-General at Tunis.

(Translation.)

Gabes, August 1, 1892.

WITH reference to my cipher telegram of the 23rd ultimo, in which I informed you of the disturbances which had arisen on the Tripolitan frontier, I beg further to acquaint you as follows.

It appears that the Tripolitan tribe of the Nalut claim the possession of land to which the military authorities contest their right, but which evidently belongs to them, and which they have annually sown with crops and planted with olive and fig trees, from which Arabs derive their chief nourishment.

When lately the time approached for gathering the harvest, the military authorities ordered the Naluts to retire from the spot without touching the crops.

The Naluts would not recognize the authority of the military authorities, and, following up their words by deeds, put to death three persons who had brought the message.

In consequence of this action, the Military Commander at Medenine, accompanied by 100 Spahis, and as I am informed by 100 native cavalry and 100 infantry, proceeded to the place at about 15 km. from a locality known as Dargen in the Tripolitan territory, and up to the present I do not know if this force has been able to effect the evacuation, or whether it is still to be seen armed, prepared to bear on the Tripolitan tribe to sweep away the Arab encampments, and seize the fruits and crops on the disputed territory.

On the other hand, the Naluts are now upon the disputed territory with a strong body of 100 Ottoman soldiers, and are strictly ordered by the Pasha of Tripoli not to begin hostilities, but to fire at once in response to any attack from the Tunisians.

At some distance from Wazen, in the direction of Tripoli, at a place called Gebel Tolren, 3,000 Turkish troops are encamped to await events, and are furnished with cannon, in order that they may be prepared to resist any invasion of the Tunisian tribes or of the French armed forces.

It appears certain, from the geographical situation of this locality, that the French are endeavouring to push forward, leaving the oasis of Ghadames on the right

for eventual occupation, when it will be more rapid and easy than at the present time.

As from such a situation sudden conflicts may arise at any moment, of which the consequences may be serious, I have considered it my duty to inform you, first by telegram and now by letter, of all that has come to my knowledge.

I will only add that the military authorities appear extremely desirous of secrecy as to what is passing on the frontier, and do all in their power to prevent any news being received. It is therefore very difficult for me to collect any reliable information.

No. 43.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received September 9.)

(Telegraphic) P.

Tunis, September 9, 1892.

ACCORDING to the French Resident here peace is re-established on the Tripolitan frontier. He adheres to the statement he made to me some days ago, and which I reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 54 of the 30th ultimo, and declares that there was no fighting and no exchange of shots.

No. 44.

Foreign Office to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

(No. 13.)

Foreign Office, September 12, 1892.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Rosebery to express to you the satisfaction with which he has learnt from your despatch No. 55 of the 1st instant that the claims of the discharged gate-keepers against the Tunisian Government have been satisfactorily settled.

I am, &c.
(Signed) P. CURRIE.

No. 45.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received October 13.)

(No. 60. Confidential.)

Tunis, October 7, 1892.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 56 of the 1st September, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have received further particulars from the British Vice-Consuls in the south of the Regency regarding the late disturbances on the Tripolitan frontiers, which I believe to be of a trustworthy character, as they are the results of careful inquiries made by my directions.

In the latter part of August, 500 Tunisian cavalry, of whom about 100 were French Spahis, crossed the Tripolitan frontiers and marched to Wassen, with the presumed intention of occupying the place.

In consequence of the opposition of the inhabitants of the district and the pacific intervention of the Turkish authorities in their behalf, the Tunisian troops withdrew to a place called Edhila on the Tunisian territory, where, owing to the scarcity of provisions, and especially of water, they suffered great privations, and were compelled to return to the military station of Medenine.

The town of Wassen is situated on the summit of a precipitous hill, accessible only by narrow bridle-paths, and surrounded by a small oasis, with a fair supply of water.

Wassen thus forms a strategical position of considerable importance on the frontiers, and is undoubtedly coveted by the French military authorities.

It is believed in the south that the project of occupying Wassen under the pretext of modifying the boundaries of the frontiers by including that district in Tunisian territory has not been abandoned, as the French Commander at Gabes has

imposed a contribution of a certain measure of barley on each native of Lia district, and has ordered several tribes to be prepared to furnish 100 camels for transport purposes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 46.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received October 24.)

(No. 62.)

My Lord,

Tunis, October 18, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of a Beylical Decree, extracted from the "Journal Officiel Tunisien" of the 18th instant relative to the expropriation for military purposes of a plot of land at Bizerta called Saksafa, near the Bay of Sebra.

I am informed by Mr. Bourke that the land in question is intended to serve as a corn and hay depot for the troops stationed at Bizerta.

It is situated on the northern shores of the lake near a headland of the Bay of Sebra, called Ras Sellam, about 1 kilom. distant from the town, and well exposed to the projected railroad which is to connect Bizerta with the main line from Tunis to Algeria.

Ras Sellam is marked on the Map (Inclosure 2 in my despatch No. 52 of the 15th August last).

I will take the opportunity when revisiting Bizerta to ascertain the exact position of Saksafa, and also of the land expropriated near Anâ Billar, as reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 61 of the 14th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 46.

Extract from the "Journal Officiel Tunisien" of October 13, 1892

Décret du 12 Octobre, 1892 (21 Rabia-el-Asual, 1310).

Louanges à Dieu.

NOTES. Ali Pacha Bey, Possesseur du Royaume de Tunis.

Vu le Décret du 30 Août, 1858 (20 Moharreau, 1275).

Sur le rapport de notre Premier Ministre,

Nous avons pris le Décret suivant.

Article 1^{er}. Est exproprié pour cause d'utilité publique le terrain ci-dessous mentionné en vert sur le plan ci-joint, sis à Bizerte au lieu dit Saksafa, près de la Baie de Sebra, d'une contenance de 88 ares environ et appartenant à M. P. Prost. Cette parcelle est bornée à l'est par un terrain appartenant à M. Prost et à un autre terrain appartenant à Mr. Bourke; au sud, par le Domaine Public Maritime; à l'ouest et au nord par un terrain appartenant à l'Administration des Habous.

Art. 2. L'expropriation sera poursuivie conformément au Décret du 30 Août, 1858 (20 Moharreau, 1275).

Art. 3. Notre Ministre de la Guerre est chargé de l'exécution du présent Décret. Tunis, le 12 Octobre, 1892.

Vu pour promulgation et mise à exécution.

Le Chef du Bureau d'ordre à la Résidence-Générale
de la République Française,
(Signé) C. BLONDEL.

The Earl of Rosebery to Lord Vicom.

(No. 158.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 26, 1892.

THE Italian Ambassador, in the course of conversation this afternoon, touched on the question of Bizerta and its fortifications, which appeared to cause his Excellency some uneasiness.

This port, he said, would form an admirable harbour for torpedo-boats, and would compel the Italians to spend money they could ill-afford in the present state of their finances for the protection of certain points on the coasts of Sicily and Sardinia.

Continuing on the subject of Tunis, his Excellency informed me that his Government had represented to the Porte the desirability of sending some troops to the frontier of Tripoli and Tunis where it was said the French had made incursions. A few soldiers had been sent, and had proved effective* for this purpose. Representations were being made by those holding similar views at Constantinople that more troops should be sent, and the Italian Ambassador there had been instructed to come to an understanding with his British colleague. His Excellency hoped that I would give instructions to the latter to use language of similar import to the Turkish Government. I promised to give the matter my serious consideration.

I am, &c.

(Signed) ROSEBERY.

No. 48.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received November 2.)

(No. 322.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, October 21, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship with copy of despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tripoli reporting on French encroachments on the Tripoli-Tunisian frontier, and commenting on the Governor-General's favourable disposition towards French projects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 48.

Consul-General Moore to Sir Clare Ford.

Sir,

Tripoli, October 7, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that latterly persistent reports have reached Tripoli, and are much talked of amongst the native population, of aggressive movements on the part of the French, with a view of securing permanent authority over, and possession of, the tract of country which constitutes the disputed boundary between Tripoli and Tunisia. For some two or three years past, the French have exercised authority over the people of the district; demanding and exacting taxes from them on their produce; telling them they were French subjects; threatening them with punishment if they should prove recalcitrant, and generally interfering with them.

These people recently came to Tripoli to lay their complaints before the Governor-General, but getting no satisfactory reply from Ahmed Rasseim Pasha, they returned and determined to invite the French to come over and establish themselves in order to avoid further annoyance and molestation. This the latter were preparing to do with a considerable body of native Spahis, under French officers, but a certain Sheikh, Saof, a semi-independent Chieftain of those parts, assembled a large force of his Arabs and allies, and prepared to resist the entry of the French, whereupon the latter, probably greatly outnumbered, withdrew for the present.

I regret that I have no means of giving your Excellency a more circumstantial and connected narrative of these events. For some reason, which I cannot explain, the Governor-General chooses to be very reticent with me whenever I broach this

* *Qy. ineffective.*

subject to him. "Yes, there are disputes between us and the French about the boundary, and I have written to Constantinople on the subject," is all I can get from his Excellency.

A short while ago two Frenchmen arrived here under escort, sent by the Governor of the Gebel-el-Gharbi, the sandjak adjoining the Tripoli-Tunis frontier. They gave themselves out to be commercial travellers for French firms. I am informed, on good authority, that they were carrying with them a quantity of arms in the guise of merchandise for distribution, it is supposed, amongst the friendly Arabs. Of these arms they were plundered by the Arabs, after which they were arrested and sent hither by the Governor. On the arrival of the Frenchmen they were handed over to the French Consul-General, who undertook to send them to Tamsa.

The Italian Consul-General is keenly watching these proceedings, and, as already reported by me, firmly believes, with many others, that Ahmed Rasseim Pasha favours these French projects. It is certainly singular that he should have recently procured for the French Agent here, and two of his subordinates, Turkish decorations of the Mejdidi, a fact which cannot fail to disconcert those Arabs who are inclined to resist the French pretensions.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. T. MOORE.

No. 49.

The Earl of Rosebery to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 227.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 2, 1892.

THE Italian Ambassador has informed me that his Government have represented to the Porte the desirability of sending some troops to the frontier of Tripoli and Tunis, where it is said the French have made incursions.

His Excellency stated that a few soldiers had been sent, and had proved effective* for the purpose. Representations were being made by those holding similar views at Constantinople that more troops should be sent, and the Italian Ambassador there had been instructed to come to an understanding with your Lordship's Agent.

If your Italian colleague should speak to you on this subject, you are authorized to use language of similar import to the Turkish Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) ROSEBERY.

No. 50.

The Earl of Rosebery to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 228.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 7, 1892.

I HAVE read with interest the Report from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tripoli as to the state of affairs on the frontier between Tunis and Tripoli which was in fact your Excellency's despatch No. 322 of the 21st ultimo.

I have to request your Excellency to take an opportunity of bringing the facts reported by Mr. Moore to the knowledge of the Sultan, as well as of your Italian colleague, with whom it would be well that, as instructed by my despatch No. 227 of the 2nd instant, you should co-operate generally on this question.

I am, &c.

(Signed) ROSEBERY.

No. 51.

The Marquis of Dufferin to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received November 10.)

(No. 321.)

My Lord,

Paris, November 9, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that M. Massicault, the French Resident-General in Tunis, died on the 4th instant. M. Massicault, who had begun

[411]

* *Qy. ineffective.*

life as a journalist, at which time he signalized himself by his attacks on the Empire, was rewarded by an administrative office in 1870. Having served in several Prefectures, he was appointed to the Residency in Tunis seven years ago, and his administration appears to have given general satisfaction at home.

It is stated that his successor will be M. Charles Rouvier, who is at present on leave from his post of French Minister at Buenos Ayres. M. Rouvier, who is not connected with the present Minister of Finance, also commenced his career as a journalist, but was attached to the Press Department of the Foreign Office during M. Waddington's tenure of that Ministry, and thence transferred to a Diplomatic post.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND AVA.

No. 52.

The Earl of Rosebery to Lord Vivian.

(No. 161.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 11, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 156 of the 26th ultimo, I transmit to you herewith, for communication to the Italian Government, copies of despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople respecting the state of affairs on the frontier of Tripoli and Tunis.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROSEBERY.

No. 53.

Lord Vivian to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received November 14.)

(No. 287. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Rome, November 10, 1892.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 156 of the 26th ultimo, reporting the language held to you by Count Tornelli on the subject of Bizerta and its fortifications, I believe that the views held by Signor Boni on this question are as follows.

The present Italian Government share the regret of their predecessors at the view expressed in Lord Salisbury's despatch No. 26 of the 30th January, 1891, "that the creation of a great naval fortress at Bizerta would, in the judgment of our naval experts, do more injury to France, by dispersing her force, than the strategic advantages of the station itself would repay."

They differ from this view for the reasons set forth in the Memorandum communicated by Count Tornelli to Lord Salisbury on the 28th May, 1891, but they defer to the opinion then expressed by his Lordship, that the time had not come for making any representation to the French Government on the subject.

But the uncertainty hanging over the intentions of the French with respect to Bizerta, and the important works they have commenced there, are a source of very great uneasiness to the Italian Government, who are convinced that, should Bizerta be converted into a fortified port and naval station, having at its back all the military resources of the Provinces of Algeria and Tunis, it would present a most serious and imminent danger to the Italian coasts, but the Italian Government feel that they have no ground to demand explanations from the French Government, which has made no promise to them with respect to the fortifications of Bizerta, and their hands are tied by our refusal to move in the matter.

On more than one occasion, however, when the French Ambassador has informally professed the desire of his Government to cultivate cordial relations with Italy, it has been hinted to him that the best proof that could be given of the sincerity of these professions would be a formal assurance that it was not their intention to fortify Bizerta, but this official assurance has never been forthcoming.

The Italian Government being convinced that the interests of England are directly and vitally concerned in preserving the balance of power in the Mediterranean, in pro-

* Nos. 49 and 50.

tecting her route to the East, and in preventing France from acquiring undue preponderance in that sea, look to Her Majesty's Government to take the initiative at the proper moment in asking for explanations with respect to the fortifications of Bizerta, and whenever they may think that the time has come for doing so, the Italian Government would be prepared to support these representations.

Meanwhile, beyond keeping a strict watch on the French proceedings at Bizerta, it is not the present intention of this Government to move in the matter or to show any suspicion of France by fortifying their coasts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) VIVIAN.

No. 54.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received November 14.)

(No. 64.)

My Lord,

Tunis, November 9, 1892.

WITH reference to my telegram of the 5th instant reporting the death of M. Massicault, the French Resident, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that he was buried yesterday with full civil and military honours. The funeral was attended by the foreign Representatives and the staff of the Residency in uniform, by the members of the Government and Municipal Departments, and deputations from the principal Guilds of the town.

M. J. Massicault, who commenced life as a journalist, rose to be Prefect of the Rhône in 1882, and was appointed Resident-General and Minister Plenipotentiary at Tunis in 1890. He was an able administrator, and adhered firmly to the policy of maintaining the Government of the Protectorate, gaining thereby the good-will and friendship of the Bey and his family.

It is very desirable, on many accounts, that M. Massicault's successor should be equally opposed to all agitations in favour of annexation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 55.

The Marquis of Dufferin to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received November 15.)

(No. 334.)

My Lord,

Paris, November 14, 1892.

ACCORDING to a letter in the "Temps" of this evening (of which a copy is inclosed*), matters do not appear to be proceeding smoothly in Tunis, and seditious newspapers and placards in Arabic are stated to have been distributed amongst the native population.

An official communication to the same newspaper states that the Chargé d'Affaires of the Residency has been instructed to take measures to prohibit, on the territory of the Regency, such Arabic publications as may excite the natives to the contempt of the laws and of the authorities, or may foment religious passions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND AVA.

No. 56.

Lord Vivian to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received November 28.)

(No. 246.)

My Lord,

Rome, November 22, 1892.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 161 of the 11th instant, I have the honour to inclose a translation of a note from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, expressing his gratification at the instructions sent to Her Majesty's Ambassador at

* Not printed.

Constantinople to co-operate with his Italian colleague in representing to the Porte the position of affairs on the frontier of Tunis and Tripoli, and requesting me to convey his sentiments to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) VIVIAN.

Inclosure in No. 50.

Signor Brin to Lord Vivian.

(Translation.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Rome, November 19, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's note of the 14th instant, containing a copy of Lord Rosebery's two despatches to Sir C. Ford, instructing him to co-operate with the Italian Ambassador at Constantinople in regard to the representations which it may be expedient to make to the Sublime Porte respecting the position of affairs on the frontiers of Tunis and Tripoli.

I notice with pleasure in this matter a further proof of the thorough and cordial understanding existing between the two Governments.

In thanking your Excellency for this courteous communication, I venture to express the hope that you will act as interpreter of our sentiments with Lord Rosebery.

No. 57.

Lord Vivian to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 70.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Rome, December 2, 1892.

THE Government is embarrassed by a notice which has been given of an interpellation in the Chamber of Deputies as to the steps which are being taken to provide against the danger of the fortification of Bizerta.

In view of the refusal of the French Government to give Italy any assurance on this point, Signor Brin proposes to reply to the effect that there does not seem any necessity to take action in the matter at the present moment, as it does not appear that fortifications are actually being constructed at Bizerta, but his Excellency feels that his hands would be strengthened if he were authorized to add that Her Majesty's Government were of the same opinion.

I told M. Brin that although Lord Salisbury had expressed this view, I was unable to say if your Lordship shared it, and that I could not authorize the addition he suggested without your permission.

No. 58.

The Earl of Rosebery to Lord Vivian.

(No. 36.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 5, 1892.

I SHOULD prefer no mention of Her Majesty's Government during Bizerta discussion.

No. 59.

Lord Vivian to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received December 10.)

(No. 254. Confidential.)

Rome, December 2, 1892.

My Lord,

SIGNOR BRIN told me yesterday that he was much embarrassed how to answer an interpellation, of which notice had been given by a Member of the Chamber of Deputies, asking what measures the Government were taking, or intended to take, for the protection of the Italian coasts, in view of the threatened conversion of Bizerta into a naval fortress. He had in vain appealed to General dal Verme to withdraw his interpellation, on the ground that it was inopportune and likely to give

umbrage to France, but the latter had insisted that the interests of Italy demanded that public attention should be called to the serious danger which threatened her from Bizerta, and he blamed the Marquis di Rudini for having allowed the question to sleep.

Signor Brin then appealed to the French Ambassador, who undertook to ask his Government if they would authorize him to give any assurances respecting the fortification of Bizerta, but the answer which had just been received was a positive refusal to do so, and this reply had been confirmed by the Italian Ambassador at Paris, who had added that he was convinced that the French intended to make Bizerta a strong naval port.

In these circumstances, Signor Brin proposed to answer the interpellation by stating that as the Government are not aware that Bizerta is actually being fortified, they do not consider it necessary or expedient to take any action at present in the matter, and his Excellency said that as this answer was founded on the view expressed by Lord Salisbury, it would greatly strengthen its force if he could be authorized to add that this opinion was shared by Her Majesty's Government.

I said that though it was true that Lord Salisbury had expressed an opinion to this effect, I did not know if your Lordship shared it, or what your views were on the subject, and that I could not authorize him to make such a statement without your permission.

I telegraphed to your Lordship to-day to this effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) VIVIAN.

No. 60.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 365.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 7, 1892.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatches instructing me to co-operate generally with my Italian colleague here on the question of the frontier between Tunis and Tripoli, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that Count Collobiano, the Italian Ambassador, with whom I have had communications on the subject, informs me that he proposes to draw the attention of the Sublime Porte again to the encroachments which took place in the months of August and September last on the part of the French on the Tunis-Tripoli frontier, and to the attempt of the latter to occupy Waxzan.

My Italian colleague will endeavour to obtain the execution of the measures which were proposed last year by the Ottoman Staff, and approved by His Imperial Majesty, namely, the strengthening of the Turkish outposts on the particular frontier in question.

The carrying out of these measures appears to have caused some difficulties, which were raised by the local Turkish authorities, but my Italian colleague will insist on precise orders being sent with a view to the instructions being enforced.

For my part, I shall, in accordance with the instructions which your Lordship has conveyed me, seize an early opportunity of bringing to His Imperial Majesty's knowledge the facts reported in Mr. Moore's despatch, which I may state are in entire conformity with the information on the subject which has been received by my Italian colleague, with whom I shall not fail to co-operate generally on this question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 61.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received December 19.)

(No. 115.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, December 19, 1892, 11 A.M.

TRIPOLI-TUNIS frontier.

The Italian Ambassador here has told me that the Italian Consul at Tripoli has been informed by the Turkish Governor there that, in the view of appointing a

[411]

M

Commission to delimit, in accord with Turkish officers, the Tripoli-Tunis frontier. His Imperial Majesty has instructed him to place himself in communication with the Bey of Tunis.

No. 62.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 70.)

My Lord,

Tunis, December 15, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 68 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to report to your Lordship the arrival, yesterday, of M. Rouvier, the new French Resident. He landed in uniform, accompanied by the members of the Residency, and was received at the Tunis railway station by the General commanding the Army of Occupation, by whom he was escorted through the streets, lined with troops, up to his house.

The audience of the Bey and the official receptions, including an exchange of visits with the foreign Representatives, took place during the same day. On presenting his credentials to the Bey, M. Rouvier stated that the mission confided to him by the President of the Republic is intended to consolidate still more, if it be possible, through the Protectorate, the ties which unite the two countries. He trusted that the accomplishment of his mission would be facilitated by His Highness, and would enable him to labour successfully for the prosperity of the Regency.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 63.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received December 23.)

(No. 71.)

My Lord,

Tunis, December 19, 1892.

I HAVE learnt from a thoroughly reliable source that preparations are being made by the French military authorities in the Regency for the delimitation of the Tripolitan frontiers, and that a Commission, composed of French and Turkish officers, will be shortly appointed for that purpose.

The line of demarcation will probably be based on the tracings of the French Military Map of 1887, which has hitherto been the cause of the frequently-recurring conflicts in those regions.

I have always been given to understand that the barrier which has hitherto prevented a formal delimitation of the frontiers has been the objection of the Porte to negotiate with the Government of the Protectorate. I am unable to state how this difficulty will be overcome.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 64.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received December 26.)

(No. 372. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 16, 1892.

IN accordance with your Lordship's instructions, conveyed to me in your Lordship's despatch No. 228 of the 7th ultimo, to bring to the notice of the Sultan the contents of Mr. Moore's report respecting French incursions in the Tripoli territory, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I instructed Sir Alfred Sandison, my First Dragoman, to repair to the Palace yesterday, and to seek an interview of His Imperial Majesty's First Secretary, and read to him a Memorandum which I had drawn up, and a copy of which is herein inclosed. Sir Alfred Sandison was further instructed by me to express the hope that the information which was conveyed in the Memorandum might be brought confidentially to the Sultan's knowledge. I have

informed my Italian colleague of the step which I have taken, under your Lordship's instructions in this matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 64.

Substance of Report by Sir A. Sandison, dated October 7, 1892.

DERNIÈREMENT la population indigène de Tripoli d'Afrique s'est beaucoup émue des nouvelles colportées sans cesse au sujet des mouvements agressifs de la France tendant à prendre possession du territoire qui forme la frontière en contestation entre Tripoli d'Afrique et la Tunisie, en vue d'y assurer son autorité d'une façon permanente.

Durant ces deux ou trois dernières années, la France a exercé son autorité sur les populations de ce district en imposant et prélevant des taxes sur leurs produits, en leur signifiant qu'elles étaient des sujets Français, en les menaçant de les punir si elles se montraient récalcitrantes, enfin, en se mêlant en général de leurs affaires.

Dernièrement, ces populations sont venues à Tripoli pour soumettre leurs plaintes au Gouverneur-Général; mais n'ayant pas pu obtenir une réponse satisfaisante d'Ahmet Rassin Pacha, elles s'en sont retournées en prenant la détermination d'inviter les Français à venir s'établir chez elles pour s'épargner de nouveaux désagréments et vexations de leur part. Les Français se préparaient à effectuer cette prise de possession avec un nombre considérable de Spahis indigènes commandés par des officiers Français, lorsque le Sheikh Souf, Chef puissant de ces contrées, réunit une force armée composée de ses Arabes et alliés et se prépara à s'opposer à l'entrée des Français. Ces derniers, voyant probablement qu'ils avaient affaire à des ennemis très nombreux, se sont abstenus pour le moment de mettre leur plan à exécution.

Il y a quelque temps deux Français sont arrivés à Tripoli sous escorte envoyée par le Gouverneur de Djebel-el-Gharbi, sanjak attenant à la frontière de Tripoli et Tunis. Ils se sont fait passer pour des commis-voyageurs envoyés par des maisons Françaises. On a appris de bonne source qu'ils étaient porteurs d'une certaine quantité d'armes en guise de marchandises pour en faire la distribution, on suppose, parmi les Arabes amis. C'est après que ces armes avaient été volées par les Arabes que ces Français furent arrêtés et expédiés à Tripoli par le dit Gouverneur.

A leur arrivée à Tripoli ces Français ont été consignés au Consul-Général de France, qui s'est chargé de les diriger sur Tunis.

On serait porté à croire qu'Ahmet Rassin Pacha ne se rend pas compte de la gravité de la situation. Son Excellence a même obtenu des décorations pour le Consul-Général de France et deux de ses subordonnés. Ce fait ne manquera pas de décourager ceux des Arabes qui sont portés à s'opposer aux empiètements de la France.

No. 65.

Memorandum communicated by Count H. de Minerbi, December 28, 1892.

(Confidentiel.)

DES travaux en cours à Bizerte, l'œuvre principale est, sans doute, l'excavation d'un nouveau canal d'accès partant de la mer et allant jusqu'au lac, destiné à remplacer l'ancien canal qui, par sa configuration, sa mince profondeur, et les ponts qui le traversent ne peut servir qu'à de petits bâtiments destinés à la navigation de cabotage. Du lac le nouveau canal aboutit en ligne droite à la mer, coupant à une distance d'environ 500 mètres de Bizerte la route qui de cette ville mène à Tunis.

Longueur du Canal: un kilomètre à peu près.

Largeur: 100 mètres.

Profondeur: variant de 4 à 5 mètres jusqu'à 7 et 8 mètres.

On pense à Bizerte que la profondeur du nouveau canal sera portée à 12 mètres au moins. Ce travail ne serait ni long ni difficile à faire, les dragues ayant à opérer sur un lit sablonneux dépourvu de rochers.

Le canal sera protégé par des banquettes ayant une largeur de 60 mètres.

On est en train de construire au nord du canal une digue dont la longueur est actuellement de 800 mètres, qui devra, dit-on, être prolongée de 400 autres mètres dans la direction de Ras Gebel (Cap Zebibo). Cette digue formée de blocs artificiels et naturels a une largeur de 12 mètres.

Une autre digue sera, assure-t-on, construite au sud pour compléter l'autre.

Les travaux du nouveau port ont été entrepris par la Compagnie du port de Bizerte pour la somme de 12 millions, dont la moitié au comptant et l'autre moitié est représentée par des Concessions, telles que la pêche dans le lac, terrains, &c. C'est indirectement que l'on a eu ce renseignement, car "l'Amoo Bei" (Décret Beylical) pour la Concession des travaux ne paraît pas avoir été publié, et l'on n'a pas pu avoir connaissance exacte de l'acte de Concession de la Compagnie du port de Bizerte (Compagnie formée à Paris entre MM. Hersent et Couvreur et amis).

Aucune fortification n'a été érigée à Bizerte depuis l'occupation Française. De vastes baraques ont toutefois été construites pour l'usage de casernes sur une colline voisine du fort d'Espagne pouvant loger, à ce qu'il paraît, 2,000 hommes.

Le génie militaire a fait, en outre, construire deux postes à sémiphores : l'un à Punta Secca et l'autre à Gebel Wador, avoisinant la mer et les côtes voisines sur un rayon assez étendu. On aurait aussi, paraît-il, l'intention de démolir le vieux fort d'Espagne pour le remplacer par des fortifications plus conformes aux progrès de l'art de la guerre.

Il revient de bonne source, que le génie militaire Français avait, dès la fin de 1890, entamé des négociations pour l'achat de deux collines faisant partie d'une propriété nommée Ben Negro appartenant à Mr. Burke, Vice-Consul Britannique, dans le but d'y faire ériger des fortifications. Il s'agirait de la construction de fortifications qui, des hauteurs du fort d'Espagne et des collines de Ben Negro domineraient la mer ouverte, et serviraient à défendre le port. Mais rien n'a été conclu malgré les pourparlers relatifs au prix et à la quantité du terrain à acheter (15 millim.). Le Gouvernement aurait décidé, en principe, ces travaux, mais l'époque à laquelle ils devraient être exécutés est encore incertain et l'on ne viendrait pas acheter avant le temps.

Il y a également le projet de construire une batterie (indiquée sur la carte topographique) à l'Enscir Bettar. Il ne résulte pas pourtant qu'elle y ait été établie jusqu'à présent.

Rien de nouveau, en ce qui concerne l'armement, si ce n'est l'envoi à Bizerte de quatre plateformes pour des canons de gros calibre. Cet envoi avait fait supposer que tous les canons (ou une partie de ceux-ci) arrivés de la France à Bona par la voie de mer, et de Bona à Manuba près de Tunis par la voie de terre, fussent destinés à Bizerte.

Il n'existe dans ce port jusqu'à présent que six canons de campagne. La garnison de Bizerte se compose de deux compagnies de Zouaves, d'une batterie d'artillerie, et de quelques soldats du génie. La marine de guerre Française y stationne un bateau-torpilleur de deuxième classe, un ponton, une pompe hydraulique à vapeur, une barque à vapeur, et un bassin flottant pour les réparations pouvant être nécessaires au bateau-torpilleur.

En conclusion, la France construit à Bizerte un grand port pouvant servir à ses navires de guerre.

Si l'on considère l'état du commerce de la Régence ainsi que la proximité de Bizerte à Tunis, on comprend que la construction d'un port commercial (construction coûteuse et sérieusement difficile) a spécialement en vue le but de le faire servir à la marine de guerre.

Rien n'a pourtant été fait jusqu'ici pour donner au nouveau port le caractère militaire qui est très probablement dans la pensée intime du Gouvernement Français.

Il est à remarquer seulement que la profondeur du nouveau canal pas n'est de 3½ mètres, comme il avait été annoncé dans certains discours officiels, mais au contraire d'une profondeur apte à permettre le passage des plus gros navires de guerre.